IN THE KINGDOM OF THE SHAH



THE PRINCE ZIITE SULTAN—THE SHADOW OF THE KING.

IN THE KINGDOM OF THE SHAH

BY

E. TREACHER COLLINS
F.R.C.S.

LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN
PATERNOSTER SQUARE
1896

[*All rights reserved.*]

PREFACE.

—o—

In 1894 I made a journey through Persia, from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. The object of the expedition was to visit the Prince Zille Sultan, the eldest son of the Shah, and Governor of Ispahan, who wished to consult me with reference to an affection of his eyes.

A telegram arrived, asking me to start with as little delay as possible, on the evening of the day I was married, and, after much deliberation, I decided to take my newly-wedded wife with me.

Everything was done to render our journey as comfortable as possible, and the reader of the following pages will discover what travelling *en luxe* in Persia is like.

I am aware that many descriptions of travel in Persia have of late years been published, and that

much which I have to say has been described before. Persia is, however, still a land almost entirely unknown to nine out of every ten of the English people, and I believe that the description of a journey which was brimful of interest to myself cannot fail to be entertaining to others.

LONDON, *April* 1896.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	ZOROASTRIANISM	3
II.	THE PORTS OF THE PERSIAN GULF	11
III.	ASCENT TO THE TABLELAND OF IRAN	27
IV.	THE FAIREST JEWEL OF IRAN	52
V.	TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO	67
VI.	OUR ISTAKBAL	102
VII.	THE SHADOW OF THE KING AND HIS SURROUNDINGS	130
VIII.	SCIENCE, ART, AND SUPERSTITION	159
IX.	THE CITY OF SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT AND ITS ARMENIAN COLONY	204
X.	MOONLIGHT DRIVES THROUGH DESERT PLAINS	243
XI.	THE KING OF KINGS, THE ASYLUM OF THE UNIVERSE	267
XII.	CHAPARING	276

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

—o—

PAGE

THE PRINCE ZILLE SULTAN—THE SHADOW OF THE KING . . . . . *Frontispiece*

MAP 2

PERSIAN SHOES 45

THE KALIAN OR WATER PIPE 56

GENERAL VIEW OF PERSEPOLIS (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 72

COMBAT OF KING AND MONSTER (SCULPTURE AT PERSEPOLIS, AFTER KERR PORTER) 81

RELIEF ON THE STEPS OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS (AFTER GEORGE RAWLINSON) 84

PROPYLÆA OR GATEWAY OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 88

THE TOMB OF CYRUS (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) . . 96

YEZDIKHAST (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 116

A HOUSE AT JULFA 127

CHEHL SITUN PALACE, ISPAHAN (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 135

PERSIAN PAINTING IN THE CHEHL SITUN PALACE (SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT ENTERTAINING ABDUL MOHAMMED KHAN) 141

A PERSIAN LADY'S INDOOR COSTUME 156

A PERSIAN LADY'S OUTDOOR COSTUME 163

A LADY PATIENT 166

A BAKHTIARI PEASANT GIRL 172

PAGE

A GROUP OF EARTHENWARE FROM ISPAHAN . . . 182

A SHERBET BOWL 184

EWER AND BASIN 186

A PERSIAN PAINTING 189

EMBROIDERED PORTIÈRE 194

EMBROIDERY IN GOLD THREAD 197

A WELL-KNOWN ARMENIAN OF JULFA 207

AN ARMENIAN WOMAN OF JULFA (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 210

AN ARMENIAN GIRL (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) . . 215

THE GREAT MEIDEN AT ISPAHAN (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 218

THE ROYAL MOSQUE AT ISPAHAN (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 222

THE BRITISH CONSULATE AT ISPAHAN 227

A ROAD IN JULFA (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) . . 232

A PANORAMIC VIEW OF JULFA (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) 236

A KURDISH GIRL SPINNING WOOL 252

TOMB OF FATIMA AT KUM (AFTER MADAME DIEULAFOY) . 256

A GROUP OF EARTHENWARE FROM KUM 260

A KURDISH WOMAN 291


TRANSCAUCASIA
Baku
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
CASPIAN SEA
R. Aras
Astara
Tabriz
Enzali
Resht
Astrabad
Mengil
Rustamabad
Pelchenar
Mazreh
Teheran
MT. DEMAVEND
Kasvin
Kahrizak
Ruins of Rhages
Husseinabad
Karachaid
Kharegird
Save
Kush-i-Nasret
Kum
Kermanshah
Dilly jon
Kashan
Great Salt Desert
Rabat Turk
Natenz
Mehina
Baghdad
Murchakhar
Bakhtiari
Gez
Ispahan
Zenderud
Murg
Julfa
Mayar
Yezd
R. Tigris
R. Karkha
R. Euphrates
R. Karun
Kumishah
Maksud Beggi
Yezdikhast
Shulgestan
Abadeh
Surmeh
Khan-i-Koreh
Mohammerah
Busrah
Murghab
Dehbid
Khan i Kirgen
Kermane
Dasht i Arzen
Kamisha
Tomb of Cyrus
Ruins of Persepolis
Kazerun
Zarghun
Shiraz
KARAK
Busbire
Daliky
Borazjun
Khuredi
PERSIAN GULF
Bunder Abbas
Lingah
BAHREIN
ARABIA
OMAN
45
50
55

IN THE KINGDOM OF THE SHAH.

CHAPTER I.

ZOROASTRIANISM.

We started from London on 9th February 1894. The only instructions I had received were to proceed with as little delay as possible to Ispahan, by way of Bushire, and to take with me everything necessary for treating diseases of the eye. I was not told what symptoms my patient was suffering from, but a rumour came (I know not whence it arose) that he had a serious disease of the eye, which would probably require immediate operation. Forty-three hours' continuous going in the Orient Express from Calais brought us to Brindisi, where we caught the P. & O. s.s. *Australia*, which had left London nine days previously. We reached Aden on the 19th, and changed to the

s.s. *Clyde*. This change gave rise to a complication which caused me considerable anxiety the whole of the rest of my journey to Ispahan. I discovered on arrival at Bombay, on the evening of 24th February, that one of my boxes containing all my instruments, which was duly labelled with the Company's labels, had not been transhipped, and was on its way to Australia. To have been landed in Persia without my tools would have been most disastrous; fortunately I succeeded in arresting its progress to the Antipodes by telegraphing at once to Colombo, where the *Australia* stopped a short while for coaling.

The boats for the Persian Gulf leave Bombay once a week, and we could have proceeded with the mails straight on without stopping. I was glad, however, after my hurried departure from London, to break the journey for a week at Bombay, and to complete my outfit there. Even then I was not able to take my case of instruments with me, for it did not arrive from Colombo until the day after I left.

While in Bombay, the Parsees (the descendants of the ancient fire-worshippers of Persia, who fled to India before the Arab horde which overran their fatherland in the seventh century)

naturally excited our special interest and attention. Their faith is one of the oldest in the world; its founder, Zoroaster of Bactria, has been considered by some as a contemporary of Moses, but the date at which he lived is very uncertain, it being generally estimated at about 4000 years ago. Firdausi says that Isfendiyar, son of Gushtasp, king of Persia, was his first convert, and that this prince by his eloquence persuaded his father to the faith. Gushtasp had its precepts inscribed upon 12,000 tanned cowhides, which were deposited in a vault at Persepolis, a special guard being set over them. The Zend-avesta, or "sacred book," of the Parsees of the present day dates back to the reign of the first king of the Sassanian dynasty, about the middle of the third century, at which time the idols of the Parthians were destroyed, and Zoroastrianism was re-established as the national religion. The Zend-avesta is supposed to have been a translation of a portion of the original writing.

The Zoroastrians believe in one impersonal god, Ormuzd, "the excellent," who created all that is good, but who acts according to certain fixed laws. The evils of the world are attributed to

Arhiman, "the destroyer," and the earth is the scene of the conflict between these two spirits, good ultimately prevailing. Fire is held to be the emblem of the Deity, and the believer is directed to turn towards it, or to the sun or moon, while praying. Zoroastrianism places woman on an equal footing with man; it advocates monogamy, it teaches kindness to animals, it ennobles labour: "He who guides the plough does a pious deed," is one of its maxims. Truth, cleanliness, and charity to all—not only those who are followers of a like faith—are virtues specially inculcated. The defiling of running water is regarded as a sin, a maxim which might with advantage have been adopted by other nations and religions. Like all other religions, Zoroastrianism has at various times, in the course of the centuries which have elapsed since its foundation, become complicated by ceremonies and mysticisms introduced by its Magi, or priests, which were quite foreign to the original faith.

Judged by its results, it must be considered one of the most successful creeds the world has known. It was the predominant faith of the Medes and Persians, who, under the Achæmenian kings, were the most powerful nation of their time; who ex-

tended their realms over the whole of Western Asia, even into Egypt; who built the palaces at Persepolis and Susa, the remains of which to-day, by their massive size and artistic beauty, excite our wonder and admiration; whose strict probity in their laws is still proverbial all the world over, and whose liberality to dependent nations is shown by the way they permitted the Jews to return from captivity, and erect once again at Jerusalem the Temple of their God. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, and there can be little doubt that all this prosperity and strength was the outcome of a pure and beautiful faith. The followers of Zoroaster to-day form but small communities both in Persia and India. The Guebres, as they are termed in the former country, are nearly entirely confined to the towns of Yezd and Kerman, of which they only form a small part of the population.

In India Zoroastrianism, previous to the advent of the English, ran a good chance of becoming stamped out altogether by the Mohammedanism and Brahmanism by which it was surrounded. During the last century there has been a marked revival of interest and enthusiasm amongst the Parsees in their religious books and old doctrines,

and they are now showing themselves worthy descendants of an ancient and glorious lineage.

Though Zoroastrianism now plays directly but a small part in the world to what it once did, indirectly it is still bearing abundant fruit; it greatly influenced Judaism during the long period they were brought in contact, and, through Judaism, Christianity is much indebted to it.

Bombay would look far less gay than it does without the Parsees. The women deck themselves with silk cloaks of the most brilliant and varied hues, which fall in graceful folds from the head to the shoulders and body, and set off most effectively their dark hair and swarthy complexion.

On Malabar Hill we visited the "Towers of Silence," and saw the method of disposal of the dead adopted by these worshippers of fire.

They are unable to bury their dead in the ground, for that would be a pollution of the earth, the source of all life. They cannot consume them with fire, which is the emblem of the Deity; they therefore expose them to the air that they may be devoured by carnivorous birds or animals, and be transformed once more into flesh. This

custom accounts for the absence in Persia of the vast ancient cemeteries that are such a striking feature in other countries, which, like it, were densely populated in olden times. The arrangements for carrying out this mode of disposal of the dead at Bombay is as follows. Situated at the top of a hill overlooking the town and bay is a beautiful garden, full of trees and flowers. In it are several circular towers, unroofed, and entered by only one door. Running round the interior of the towers are iron gratings, on which the dead bodies are laid by attendants, there being separate places for men, women, and children. Vultures sit on the walls of the towers, and, as soon as the body is placed in one, pounce down and strip it of the flesh. The bones remain to dry in the sun, and when the rains come the earthy constituents of them are washed down into a central pit, which drains away into the ground.

No one but the attendants are allowed to approach beyond a spot a certain distance from the towers, which is termed "The Place of Parting." A model of the interior of a tower is shown to visitors. A building is provided in the garden for the friends of the deceased to sit and pray, or meditate in. As we were leaving the garden we

met the body of a child being brought up the hill. The attendants, dressed in white, were carrying it; two priests, in flowing white robes, and the parents following. It seemed to us at first horrid to think of those ferocious birds tearing to pieces the body of one whom we held dear. It is a good example of how a habit of mind influences us in what we consider gruesome or otherwise. A Parsee doubtless would feel much the same sense of horror at the defilement of the holy earth by a dead body, as we feel horror at the tearing to pieces of a body by a carnivorous bird. As a matter of fact, apart from sentiment, it becomes merely a question of the body being devoured quickly by birds or slowly by worms.

At Bombay you see side by side three different modes of disposal of the dead — the Towers of Silence of the Parsees, the funeral pyres of the Hindoos, and the burial in the earth of the Christians. There is no doubt that that of the followers of the faith which prides itself on being the most civilised has the least to recommend it from a sanitarian's point of view.

CHAPTER II.

THE PORTS OF THE PERSIAN GULF.

We left Bombay in the s.s. *Karagola* on March 3rd. The whole of the foredeck was occupied by a mixture of Afghans, Parsees, Arabs, Persians, and Hindoos, together with their luggage, their bedding, and their eatables to last them for two days, until we reached Kurrachee. They were carried there for a rupee each, but had to find their own food and water. It was a curious sight to see this mixture of different nationalities, with their varying costumes, all crowding together, eating, drinking tea, sleeping, smoking, playing cards, or praying. When, the day after we started, the wind arose, the ship rolled, and the waves were dashing over, the scene presented is indescribable.

At Kurrachee we again changed steamers, and were transferred to the s.s. *Mecca*. Both it and the one we had just left belong to the British India Steam-Ship Navigation Company, in whose hands

is the main trade of the Gulf. The next place we stopped at was Muscat, the capital of the province of Oman. It has a most picturesque little harbour, surrounded on three sides by high jagged brown rocks, with not a leaf or blade of vegetation showing on them anywhere. On a piece of level ground facing the entrance of the harbour at the foot of the rocks, lies the town of flat-roofed houses. Flags were flying over the Sultan's palace and the British Consulate, the latter being by far the most substantial building in the place. On getting well into the harbour we could see that the rocks on the south side of it were in the form of an island, being separated from the mainland by a narrow stream. This huge island of rock, whose sides rise almost perpendicularly from the sea, has been a playground for British tars, who have amused themselves by decorating it with the names of their vessels and the dates at which they were located there, in large white letters.

An English vessel, we were told, once passed safely through the narrow stream between the island and the mainland one Christmas morning, when absent friends had been toasted rather too freely.

On the heights overlooking the town on either

side are perched some small forts, which, together with the guns they contain, are some of the relics to be found all along this coast of the Portuguese ascendency in matters maritime during the sixteenth century. This secluded spot, just a year after our visit, was the scene of considerable confusion and strife. A party of Bedouins, on account of some religious misunderstanding, attacked and gained possession of the town: the Sultan and his followers took refuge in the surrounding forts, the Europeans and English subjects fled to the gunboats in the harbour. The disturbance lasted for some days, peace being ultimately restored by the payment of a sum of money to the invaders. England has a large share in the management of the affairs of Muscat; the Sultan is paid by her Rs.80,000 a year, formerly received by him from the Sultan of Zanzibar, but taken on by England on his consenting to put down the slave trade. The trade of Muscat is nearly entirely British, or Anglo-Indian, the chief export being dates. On our coming to anchor our vessel was soon surrounded by natives, in long narrow boats, which they propelled with paddles the shape of spades. They brought on board for sale, dates, pomegranates, shells, and a sweetmeat, called

Halwa, which they manufacture from flour, milk, sugar, and spice. Its appearance is not in its favour, being of a dirty grey colour, and having a gelatinous consistency; it tastes, however, much better than it looks. On account of the great delay there was in transhipping cargo, we lay for nearly twenty hours in the harbour.

In the early morning we went ashore with Captain Skinner in his gig, and had a walk through the town; we passed the gateway of the Sultan's palace, where formerly a lion was kept chained up, but which we were disappointed to find had been removed from his post. The gate-posts of most of the houses—even some of the commonest—are elaborately carved. The town is surrounded by walls with large gateways in them, which are kept guarded. All the inhabitants were going about armed with knives, pistols, or matchlock guns with long barrels. It being Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath, the greater part of the Bazaar was closed. We saw, however, *Halwa* in the process of manufacture, which did not increase our desire to partake of it. We left Muscat at noon: it was a new moon that night, and the sea was a dead calm. We stood for a long time on the bridge, watching the beautiful phos-

phorescence in the water. The ripples made by the steamer appeared as sinuous curves of the most brilliant bluish-green hue.

> "'Tis moonlight over Oman's sea,
> Her banks of pearls and palmy isles
> Bask in the night beam beauteously,
> And her blue waters sleep in smiles."—*Moore.*

When Bartholomew Dias rounded for the first time the southern limit of Africa, in 1486, the death-warrant of the extensive commerce, which was then carried on in the Persian Gulf, was signed, and its execution became only a matter of time. The discoverer of the Southern Cape of Africa named it the "Cape of Storms," but the Portuguese sovereign, delighted with the prospects its discovery opened up, changed it to the "Cape of Good Hope." It proved to be anything but a cape of good hope to the ports of the Persian Gulf, which up to then had been on the high road along which the goods from India and China passed to the West. The chief of these ports was the once celebrated city of Ormuz. The original city of Ormuz (the one visited by that king of mediæval travellers, Marco Polo) was situated on the mainland, but the one which attained to so much wealth and prosperity was on an island some

little distance from the Persian coast. We passed close to this island, which, as far as we could see, appeared destitute of animal or vegetable life. It was originally inhabited by Arabs, who sought refuge there from the Tartar invaders of Persia. Albuquerque conquered it, and for a century it was in the possession of Portugal. The inhabitants were secure from the exactions to which they would have been exposed on the mainland, by the unsettled and oppressive government of the surrounding countries. Hence, though exceedingly badly adapted for the site of a great city, on account of its poor water-supply and the severe climate, it became the great emporium to which the rich and varied manufactures of the East and its numerous other products were brought, to be subsequently conveyed by caravan across Persia to Europe. In 1622 Ormuz was captured by the united forces of Shah Abbas and the East Indian Company from the Portuguese, and the chief seat of commerce was again transferred to the mainland, to a town then named Gombrum, but which was afterwards changed to Bunder Abbas, in honour of the king who had conquered it. We anchored outside Bunder Abbas. There is no proper harbour, and the coast

shelves down very gradually, so that we had to keep out a long distance from the shore. Here, where the trade used to consist of precious stones, silks, pearls, ivory, and cloth of gold—what is it we wait all day to take on board? One thousand grindstones, which are carried up to Busrah for an anna apiece, and numerous packages of henna-leaves, a decoction made from which the Mohammedans use to stain a light orange colour their nails, hair, palms of their hands, and soles of their feet.

This cargo was brought to the steamer in craft of the most rotten description, whose prows were long and narrow, projecting a long way out of the water. They were propelled by one broad square sail, and had formidable-looking, five-pronged anchors. The skins of their occupants varied greatly in hue from the lightest brown to the darkest black; the clothing of many consisted only of a loin-cloth, while some had in addition elaborately embroidered waistcoats! Bunder Abbas has the reputation of being one of the hottest places on the face of the earth. It is commonly reported that you have only to scratch the surface of the ground and you come at once upon the infernal regions.

We left Bunder Abbas about seven in the evening, passed the island of Kishm, and arrived at Lingah at six the next morning. From the sea Lingah is a pretty-looking place, with a long range of flat-roofed houses, from the midst of which rise a graceful minaret and some date-trees. It is backed by a lofty range of mountains of a light grey and deep purple colour. The captain told us it is a place to which distance lends enchantment, and did not advise us to go ashore, the town and habits of the people being equally filthy. As we dropped anchor the most vivid forked lightning was playing over the mountains, and shortly afterwards we had a thunderstorm, accompanied by heavy rain. This was repeated later on in the day, and so delayed the discharge of cargo that we could not get off again that night.

We were awakened the next morning by a tremendous babel of voices: numbers of excited natives, all shouting their loudest, were crowding in their boats around the steamer. The cause of all this commotion was that one of them had stolen Rs. 30, and had got on board the previous night, thinking we should have left before morning. He had been tracked, and was dis-

covered hiding under one of the second-class berths. He was taken off to have justice administered to him. Poor wretch! the punishment for theft, according to the Mohammedan law, is the loss of a hand.

From Lingah we crossed the Gulf to Bahrein, the far-famed centre of the pearl fishery; a low-lying island on the Arabian coast. We had looked forward to going ashore here and riding on donkeys to some celebrated wells, but it was a long way from the ship to the shore, the wind was unfavourable, and we should probably have got drenched, so we allowed ourselves to be dissuaded from going. The pearl fishery does not commence until much later in the year, about June. The whole business is in the hands of contractors, for whom the divers work. Packages of artificial pearls, we were told, are frequently shipped up here to be mixed with the genuine ones.

The Arabs in their boats, with long flowing brown tunics made of camel's hair, resemble exactly the Apostles as they are depicted on the Sea of Galilee. We took on board from Bahrein 150 passengers, mostly pilgrims bound for Kerbela. The closely-veiled women were hauled up the side of the vessel, looking like bundles of rags.

The whole of our foredeck now became densely packed with the strangest collection possible.

We had, too, several Arabs and Chaldeans as first-class passengers, who, fortunately, did not feed with us, but prepared their own mixtures of rice and meat in one large dish, around which they sat on the deck and fed themselves with their fingers. The cabin boys were Portuguese, and the crew Lascars, so that we had on board about as varied a mixture of the human species as can well be met with. It was a treat to get on the bridge, away from all the crowd on deck, with their numerous and varied odours, and watch the brilliant, sparkling moonlight dancing on the waves.

> "The moon hath risen clear and calm
> And o'er the green sea palely shines,
> Revealing Bahrein's groves of palm
> And lighting Kishma's amber vines."—*Moore.*

On leaving Bahrein we again crossed the Gulf to get to Bushire. All along the Persian side of the Gulf there is a wall of high rugged mountains —the boundary of the great tableland of Iran. Between these mountains and the shore there is a tract of level country three or four miles in width, which looks as if nature had especially designed it for a line of rail. Mr Palgrave, the celebrated

African explorer, suggested many years ago the extension of the railway from Kurrachee, along the coast-line of the Gulf to Busrah on the Shat-el-Arab. It would form one link in the chain which must sooner or later connect India with the Mediterranean by an iron road, and place it within a week's journey of London.

Whether the continuation of this chain should follow the old caravan route up the Euphrates Valley to Allepo and Alexandretta, or whether, as has recently been suggested by Mr Black in an article in the *Contemporary Review*, it should cross the Arabian Desert to Port Said, the link binding Kurrachee to Busrah would in both cases be the same. The Euphrates Valley line would open up an intensely interesting piece of country. The ruins of Babylon, the city of Job, the city of the Caliphs, and the supposed site of the Garden of Eden, would doubtless soon become popular holiday resorts. The line along the shore of the Persian Gulf is one which I should imagine would be favourably regarded by the Persians themselves, for while it would afford an excellent outlet for their natural products and manufactured goods, it would not break through the seclusion and protection they obtain from their steep, rocky

mountain passes.. A railway of such a character would, of course, have to be constructed by British capital. Along the coast-line it would be perfectly secure for British interests, for the English are the police of the Gulf, and everywhere in it their influence is predominant. The advantages which would result from shortening the route to India by seven days are so obvious that it is needless to enter into them. The only wonder is that the matter has not long before been made one of national importance, and pressed forwards by all concerned with the greatest impatience.

Bushire, which we reached soon after breakfast, has now under British influence become the chief Persian port, but it has no proper harbour. A stretch of three miles of shallow water intervenes between the anchorage and the shore. The whole Persian fleet was lying here; it consists of but one vessel, the *Persepolis*, built and officered by Germans. There was also close by H.M.S. *Sphinx*, a paddle-wheeled steamer, especially constructed to draw very little water, for use along the shelving coast of the Gulf. We went on board her: the officers' cabins are unusually roomy and well

ventilated; everything has been done to render an existence of three years in the hottest sea in the world as endurable as possible. We were just negotiating with one of the rogues of boatmen, who had put off for cargo, to take us ashore, when à boat came alongside with one of Messrs Sassoon's agents, and a tall man, an Armenian, with iron-grey hair and moustache, who wore European clothes, and one of the most voluminous frock-coats I had ever seen, there being numerous little pleats in it from the waist downwards. I afterwards discovered that frock-coats in Persia are the correct thing, and that the more there is of the frock about them the better.

This man was an interpreter, Abed by name, sent down by the Prince Zille Sultan from Ispahan to act as my guide there. He was a native of Julfa, had seen a great deal of life, and spoke English excellently. He was an engineer by trade, and had been for some time in the employ of the British India Steam-Ship Company. He had kept a store in India, had served with the English in the Abyssinian war, and, just before coming for us, had been engaged by the Prince Zille Sultan to erect telephone wires between his hunting quarters and Ispahan.

Immediately on our touching the shore there was an immense struggle amongst a crowd of shouting natives for the privilege of carrying our boxes, and I was thankful we had not landed by ourselves. Abed now took charge of them, and they were passed through the Customs without any trouble; not once in the whole journey had I to open them for examination. At Bushire we were the guests of Mr Eugene Von Kornatski and his sister. He was the agent for Sassoons, and had been instructed by the Prince to engage servants and prepare everything for our journey to Ispahan.

We were very fortunate in having his and his sister's advice to guide us, for they had had considerable experience of Persian travelling, and were able to forewarn us of the difficulties we should be likely to encounter. Many times in the course of the next month we had reason to be thankful for the arrangements their foresight had made for us.

The Kornatski's house, like most of those of the European residents in Bushire, was situated three miles outside the town. It must be an exceedingly unpleasant part of the world to be located in—for quite half the year human beings

are in the condition of cold-blooded animals, the temperature being higher than that of the body. The inhabitants for several months in the year sleep on the roofs of their houses, and curse the sun each day as it reappears above the horizon. Many of the houses have little turrets surmounting them, designed to catch the air and direct it down into the rooms. In March, when we were there, it was sufficiently chilly in the evenings to allow of our enjoying a fire. The spring flowers were out in abundance, and the crops were beginning to appear. Bluish-green birds, the size of blackbirds (bee-eaters) were flying about in all directions.

The water supply at Bushire is very bad, and typhoid fever and dysentery very rife. The only drinkable water comes from some wells several miles from the town; a constant procession of donkeys and mules carrying skins of water goes on between them. The native women wash their clothes in salt water on the sea-shore, beating them on large flat stones with a sort of wooden bat.

The Prince and his medical attendant, Dr Hussein Khan, both sent me letters of welcome to Persia, the former asking me not to delay more

than possible on the remainder of my journey; so on the fourth day after our arrival we decided to start. A telegram from Bombay informed me that my missing case of instruments had been forwarded from there, and was on its way up the Gulf.

There is a shop in Bushire, kept by an Armenian, containing a great variety of European goods, and here we were able to purchase a number of tinned meats and other commodities for the road. We tried and approved of two horses which Mr Kornatski procured for us. The Persians evidently imagine they are the only race of individuals who can ride, and it was a long time before our groom realized that we could remain on our horses when they went anything faster than a walk.

The Bazaar at Bushire is very narrow, dilapidated, and dirty. There were quantities of Manchester cotton goods, with flowery patterns, exposed for sale, but nothing of much interest.

The governor of Bushire has a bodyguard of the most slovenly-looking soldiers, clothed in rags, which form a striking contrast to the smart British Sepoy attached to the British Consulate.

CHAPTER III.

ASCENT TO THE TABLELAND OF IRAN.

We started with our caravan from Bushire on 20th March about 2 P.M. All the morning had been busily employed in packing. Loading mules for the first time is no easy matter, as the various packages of goods which are slung on either side of their enormous pack-saddles, and fastened with ropes made of camel's hair, have to be very evenly balanced, otherwise constant irritating delays are occasioned *en route* by their slipping round.

Our cavalcade consisted of fourteen animals and seven men, my wife and myself. Seven of the mules carried loads, which consisted of the following: Boxes containing tinned provisions, beer, wine, and soda-water; the cooking apparatus, our two bedsteads, a table, chairs, carpets, the trunks we had brought with us, and my case of drugs. One picked mule carried what are termed *kajawas*. These consist of two substantial wooden

box-like structures, which balance each other on either side of the mule; they are fitted with arched tops composed of bent lathes and tarpaulin. Ours were made very gay with red twill coverings and curtains; they were provided for us to travel in, should we get tired of riding. My wife went in one several times, and found it a great relief to be shaded by the roof from the heat of the sun during the middle of the day. They have a peculiar swinging motion as the mule goes along, and some find it gives rise to a sort of sea-sickness. Another disadvantage about them is the cramped position in which the legs have to be kept. They are much used by the ladies of the harem when travelling, who, being accustomed to sit on their heels, do not experience the latter inconvenience. The mule who carries them is charged as two mules, and well deserves to be; it always has to be an extra strong one, and in many narrow and difficult places it has to be led, or the *kajawas* have to be taken down and carried. The red twill coverings made a conspicuous object in the arid plains we went through, and in the clear atmosphere we were able to distinguish our caravan when it was miles away by means of them.

The leading animal of the whole caravan was a

rough sort of pony, termed a *yaboo*. His harness was elaborately embroidered with little shells—cowries, and other sorts, and his character of leader was indicated by his carrying a large deep-toned bell; several of the other animals also carried bells, but none such a large and deep-toned one as the *yaboo*. The sound of these bells becomes only too familiar and very monotonous after a week's experience of caravaning.

My wife rode a white pony, which proved to be a wonderfully safe animal, never stumbling or missing his foothold in all the difficult and dangerous places we went through, and never giving any trouble or anxiety the whole of the way up to Teheran. I was mounted on a bay, a more showy animal than the white, with some Arab blood in him. He had been the journey to Ispahan and back before, and on the whole carried me well, but elaborate precautions had to be taken to prevent his back from becoming sore. The other animal of our caravan was a white donkey. The donkeys of Persia are most useful animals; they travel long distances with heavy loads at a good pace, and do not require anything like the amount of persuasion which is necessary to make an ordinary English donkey go. The white ones are the best. They come

mostly from Bahrein; some of them cost as much as £30 or £40. Most of the Persian donkeys have their nostrils slit vertically upwards; it is supposed to allow of their breathing easier on going uphill.

Our white donkey was ridden by the owner of the mules, an old man over sixty, who was always addressed and spoken of as Hadji, or "holy man," a title bestowed on him from having made a pilgrimage to Mecca. His head was clean shaved, and he had a long beard stained a bright orange-red colour with henna; he wore a little tightly-fitting white felt cap edged with fur, and cotton garments of butcher's blue. Seated on his white donkey he looked a most picturesque figure, not unlike Sancho Panza. He had a wonderful capacity for going to sleep in awkward places, and frequently slept on his donkey while we were going along. No doubt this capacity for sleep was largely due to taking opium.

He was assisted in driving and managing the mules by two men, or "charvadars," who travelled all the way on foot. Like their master, their clothes were of cotton, stained with indigo blue; round their waists they had leather straps, terminating in short chains, with which they urged on the animals. One of them was a tall, fine-looking

man, who went along with a swinging stride; we could not help admiring the comely shape of his calf and ankle when he tucked up his exceedingly baggy trousers. He had a haughty imperious look about his face, and seemed more cut out for the senate than for the lowly state of life in which his lot was cast. Altogether he formed a striking contrast to his companion, who shuffled along at a shambling gait, and might well have been a clown from a circus. Our servants were Abbas, the cook; Mahmood, his son, a sort of body-servant; and Kodomerood, the groom.

Abbas, a native of Bushire, was of Arab descent; he had been to India, spoke English, and had travelled the route we were going before with Europeans. We were most fortunate in having such an obliging and honest servant. As is the custom, I entrusted him with a bag of money at starting, and he paid all the expenses on the road. I presume he extracted a percentage for himself —his "*mudakhil*"— but that is quite unavoidable; it is so inrooted in the Persian nature to do so, that it is useless to try and prevent it. He was most zealous in seeing that I was not overcharged by others. There are no fixed prices for things on the road. A European is generally

asked double what any one else would be; but Abbas had a long and venomous tongue, and many were the stormy battles he fought with it for me. He had a much darker skin than most Persians, and his dusky countenance and black hair were well set off by a yellow and maroon-coloured silk handkerchief, which he wore twisted round his tightly-fitting cap.

Mahmood, his son, was an extremely lazy lad of some eighteen summers; he had his head decorated in the same picturesque manner as his father. He knew a little English, and certainly learnt a great deal more during the four months he was with us. His great delight, however, was to teach me the Persian language, or the Persian names of things.

Kodomerood, the groom, or *sise*, was a native of Ispahan, short, stumpy, and built on the square; he had a good-tempered face, and spoke nothing but Persian. The *Khanum*, as he termed my wife, he considered his especial charge, and it was very comical to see him bounding from stone to stone like a cat, in his voluminous frock-coat, as he led her horse over difficult and rocky places.

Abed, the guide and interpreter, whom I have already described, was an old and experienced

traveller; all his arrangements were most compact; he rode like our other servants on a mule, seated on the top of a pile of saddle-bags, bedding, and horse-cloths. To mount on the top of their heaps of goods, they first made a vigorous jump on to the animal's head, and then clambered up. They used no bit or rein, and only had a halter to guide with; each from time to time came a cropper, either forwards or backwards.

Starting so late in the day as we did, it was 9 P.M. before we reached the end of the first stage. The first stage out of a town in Persia is usually a short one. When so many things have to be taken, something is very likely to be forgotten, the absence of which will be discovered at the first unpacking; then, if only a short distance has been traversed, someone can easily be sent back for it. Our road for the first stage ran along a sandy, marshy plain, devoid of interest, except for the mirage which, as in many parts of Persia, was exceedingly distinct—water, trees, and buildings, with their reflections, seemed to be a short distance off, where really there was nothing but sand and a few bushes. During the latter part of the time we rode in the most brilliant moonlight, the moon being at its fullest. At Ahmedi, where

we stopped for the night, we had our first introduction to a caravanseri. We had heard these places so much talked about by those we had met during the last few days that we much wondered what they were like ; fortunately, we were prepared for something very bad. The shelter and accommodation they afford is of the very scantiest. The exterior of these buildings has much the appearance of a square fort ; some have rounded turrets at the corners. On one side there is a central archway, passing through which you find yourself in a stable-yard, with a structure arranged to form mangers for mules in the centre ; around the sides of the building are compartments, all facing on to the yard. The better caravanseri, like the one at Ahmedi, are two-storied, the upper storey being reached by what is generally an exceedingly dilapidated, steep flight of steps. There are no doors or windows to any of the compartments—the side facing the yard is an immense open archway. To obtain privacy in such places is out of the question. Leading out of the corners of the stable-yard into the turret-like structures are dark, cave-like recesses for stables.

It was extraordinary in how remarkably short a time the uninviting upper chamber was made ready

for us by our servants. First it had to be swept out, for the last occupant always leaves his rubbish to be cleared away by the next. Carpets were then spread, our tables, chairs, and beds fixed up, curtains hung over the doorways, and in three quarters of an hour after we dismounted we were sitting down to a dinner of four courses—fish, fowl, joint, and sweets, Abbas seeming to pride himself on the number he could turn out. Our novel surroundings did not keep us awake. The *yaboo's* bell was the first sound that greeted us on being called in the morning. Though we said we would start at five, we did not get off until 7.30, repacking and loading the mules taking so long. A motley crew of variously clothed peasants and mule-drivers, open-eyed and open-mouthed, collected in the yard to watch the process of our dressing, which must doubtless have seemed full of unnecessary complications, compared with their simple arrangements. Indeed, I expect they wondered why we took our clothes off at all—they make no change of garment for the night! All these loafers have to be regarded as possible thieves, and the strictest watch kept on all belongings. I pointed out to Abed some of my boxes as being especially precious, and found afterwards, to ensure their

safety, he had spread his bed (which, by the way, consisted only of a mat and a quilt) on the top of them! No charge is made for the privilege of lying in one of the dirty archways of a caravanseri, but we paid two krans to a man with a gun, who was said to have kept guard over us.

The heat during the middle of the day was so great that we had to travel early and late. We halted for the middle of the day near Khushab, which was the scene of a battle between the English and the Persians in 1857, just before the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. The cause of war between the two nations was the occupation by the latter of the city of Herat, in defiance of arrangements which had been the subject of a treaty ten years previously. The island of Karak was seized by the British; Bushire was surrounded, and surrendered. A march was then made, under the command of Sir James Outram, to Borazjun, where the Persians were encamped. On the approach of the British they evacuated their position, hoping probably to entice the enemy to follow them to the mountain passes—which form such an effective barrier from an attacking force to the interior of Persia. After occupying Borazjun for two days, Sir James

Outram commenced to return to Bushire. The Persians followed, and made a midnight attack, but were repulsed with heavy loss. Seven hundred were slain, the British loss being sixteen killed, and sixty-two wounded.*

The next point of attack by the British was on Mohammerah, at the mouth of the Karun River. This was taken, and peace shortly afterwards restored—the British, to the surprise of the Persians, consenting to evacuate not only Bushire, but also the island of Karak. Peace, however, was not effected any too soon, for England was shortly to require all her available forces in the East, to quell the rebellion in her Indian Empire.

At Borazjun we had better accommodation than on the previous night, being the guests of the Armenian clerk at the telegraph station.

March 22nd, 1894, was the Persians' New Year's Day. The festival of *No Ruz*, by the highest to the lowest, is made the cause of rejoicing. It is of great antiquity, having been instituted by Jemsheed, one of the earliest kings of Persia, who is also accredited with introducing the solar year. It had fallen this year in the month of Ramazan, that in which it is believed

* "A History of Persia," by R. G. Watson.

the Koran was sent down from Heaven, and which is, from the time the new moon first appears until the time of the next new moon, strictly observed as a month of fasting. During it the followers of the prophet must abstain from eating, drinking, and smoking from daybreak to sunset; some, wishing to act strictly up to the letter of the law, even abstain from swallowing their own saliva. Travellers, fortunately for our servants, and through them for us, are exempted from the fast. The festivities of *No Ruz*, coming in the month of Ramazan, had to be celebrated after sunset, and we heard the noise of much merriment going on in the village far into the night. Both Borazjun and Daliky, the village we next stayed at, are prettily situated amongst groves of date-trees. Dates and unleavened bread form the main articles of diet of their inhabitants. They had suffered severely from cholera the previous year, and were fearing a recurrence of it. The peasant women went about with their faces uncovered; the men were fierce and surly-looking, most of them carrying firearms; some, matchlock guns of native manufacture, with very long barrels and thin round stocks; others had pistols stuck ostentatiously in the scarves which encircled their waists.

This was the only part of Persia we visited in which we found the peasants so armed. The reason they go about thus protected is that blood feuds are very rife amongst them. The dwellings in some of the villages were of a most ramshackle description, the roof and walls of many of them being entirely composed of twigs. At one village we met a wedding procession, the bride and bridegroom being conducted home with much shouting, firing of guns, and dancing.

Shortly before reaching Daliky we crossed a stream, the water of which was a greenish colour from sulphur, and had a thick oily scum floating on it. The air in the neighbourhood was strongly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen.

Several attempts have been made to work the petroleum springs here, but so far unsuccessfully. We passed also a hot-water spring, which flowed into a small stone basin, immersion in which is supposed to cure all diseases.

Before leaving Bushire, I had obtained from Mr Johnson, the head of the Indo-European Telegraph Department there, a pass for the different telegraph rest-rooms and stations along the road; these are a great blessing to European travellers, for whose use they are almost entirely

reserved. After a series of nights in "chapar-khanehs" or caravanseri, you look forward to a telegraph station as an oasis in the desert. The pass simply consisted of the impression of a seal; seals are used throughout Persia in place of signatures. The telegraph room at Daliky was reached by a flight of steps, accommodation for the horses and the servants being underneath. It was constructed like most of the buildings in Persia, of bricks, composed of dry mud. The roof, also of mud, was supported by trunks of trees laid transversely; amongst these trunks some swallows had made their nests, and seemed very much to resent our intrusion.

From Daliky the ascent to the immense table-land, which forms the centre of Persia, begins, and now we began to realise what it is that has preserved Persia so long from the spread of Western ideas and customs. The way we went is the main route, along which all merchandise is carried to and fro, from the sea to the interior of the country. The first part of the day we were scrambling over rough, slippery rocks and along irregular stony paths; then we crossed by a most substantial bridge over the Daliky River, and proceeded along its banks for some distance,

meeting long strings of camels, laden with bales of cotton, which, after being made into cloth either in India or Manchester, will be re-imported along the same route, dyed, and made into the cloths of the natives. In the afternoon we ascended the first *kotal*—that is, the first of the great barriers which separate Shiraz from the coast. A *kotal* is a steep winding track up a mountain side; it is not, strictly speaking, a pass, for it is not situated between two hills, but winds right up the side of one. The first, which is the steepest of all, is appropriately named the Kotal-i-Mallu, or "cursed pass." The upper part of it has been paved; but the paving stones have been so laid that no foothold can be obtained on them, and all our mules were driven to one side of the paved portion.

It is unusual in Persia to find anywhere that time or trouble of any sort has been expended on the roads, and this paving of part of the *kotal*, though by no means a success, is a remarkable exception. It was carried out by one of the few Persians who has ever shown any public spirit—Mushir-el-Mulk. His fate is by no means an encouragement to others to follow his example. He created several improvements for travellers on the road between Shiraz and Bushire; the bridge

by which we crossed the Daliky River, and a substantial caravanseri at Borazjun are the result of his enterprise. He was a prosperous merchant, but was deprived of much of his wealth by the Shah, and is said to have died of a broken heart.

On reaching the top of the *kotal*, we at once began to experience a difference of temperature—it was much cooler and fresher than it had been the previous evening at Daliky. Some people ride all the way, both up and down the *kotals;* we, for the safety of necks and our horses, preferred dismounting and walking over the paved part. We were now in a large plain, with the most brilliant green grass and numerous wild flowers. I noticed red and yellow poppies, anemones, irises, daisies, stocks, and larkspur. About the centre of the plain is situated the village of Konar Takhteh, with a telegraph station.

The costume of the peasants in these parts consists of a pair of exceedingly baggy trousers; so large are they in the leg that they might be described as a divided skirt; they are made of cotton, and are usually blue in colour. Besides this, they have a garment much the shape of a night-shirt, opening all the way down the front, and worn outside the trousers; it is also made of

cotton, and varies in colour, blue, green, and brown being the more usual. Tied round the waist they wear a broad scarf, and sometimes outside all (especially in cold weather) a seamless coat, composed of thick felt, the arms of which come out without any join, and serve for gloves as well as sleeves, ending in rounded, closed extremities, and having a slit a short distance from the termination, through which the hand can be protruded when desired. Their caps, also made of felt, are round, and fit the head tightly.

From Konar Takhteh to Kamarij was a rough bit of travelling. The track in places was a series of ridges and furrows, composed of slippery clay ; in others it was a series of deep holes, into which the horses had to step one after another, sometimes standing with all four legs in different holes ; then for a little while we traversed through a rocky gorge, the bed of a stream full of loose slippery stones. Along this, the main road of Persia, we jogged, jolted, and scrambled, and finally ascended the second *kotal*, the Kotal-i-Kamarij, to the plain of the same name.

The village of Kamarij has several stone buildings, but it is all more or less in ruins. There is a marked absence of trees in these

plains; a few thorn bushes are scattered about, which peasants use for fences and fuel.

The difficult bits of the road are marked by carcasses of animals which have fallen by the way, and being too much injured to proceed further, have been left to die on the road. In a rocky defile, separating the plain of Kamarij from that of Kazerun, we met those of two camels, partially stripped of their flesh, and on the previous day we had passed those of several mules. We had a pleasant mid-day's rest on the banks of the Shapur River, close to where the ancient city, built about the year 260 A.D. by Shapur I., after whom it and the river were named, once stood. To it the Emperor Valerian was led captive, and at the height of its prosperity it boasted of a large University. Nothing now remains but scattered ruins and some rock sculptures, which unfortunately we had not time to visit. The plain of Kazerun must at one time have been most fertile, and with effective irrigation could doubtless be made so again. It is bounded on either side with brown, jagged, rocky heights, entirely devoid of a vestige of vegetation. The town of Kazerun is a fairly extensive and prosperous-looking place. Amongst its flat-roofed

houses numerous palm-trees are scattered, and on its outskirts are gardens containing orange, lemon, pomegranate, fig and date trees; none of them, however, at the time of our visit were either in fruit or blossom. Kazerun is a sort of Northampton of Persia, large numbers of the native shoes being made there. On leaving it our whole cavalcade, men and animals, turned out re-shod. We purchased some of the shoes our-



PERSIAN SHOES.

selves. The uppers are of closely knitted cotton; the heel part can be worn either up or down. When the servants are passing frequently in and out of a room, it is essential that the shoes, which are always left at the door, should be easily

removed, as they are when the heel flap is down. The soles are elastic, made of rags many times pleated and tightly sewn together; they are strengthened at the heel and arch of the foot with pieces of bone. There is considerable difference amongst them in the fineness of the knitting and the quality of the finish. They are excellent for scrambling over rocky places in, as there is not the least chance of slipping in them, but they do not of course offer the least support to the ankle.

It was three in the afternoon before we left Kazerun, there having been considerable delay in shoeing the mules; for two hours we continued along the Kazerun valley, at the end of which is a lake; we turned up, however, into a recess in the mountains before reaching this. The snow-capped peaks, which we had been catching distant glimpses of for so long, were now close above us We were proceeding along an exceedingly stony track; where it was going to lead it was impossible to see, when a sudden turn revealed a steep corkscrew path winding up the side of a mountain; it constituted the third *kotal*, the Kotal dokhter, or "Daughter kotal." Its natural difficulties of ascent had, as in Kotal-i-Mallu, been considerably increased by an attempt at paving,

and the remains of several dead animals were strewed along it.

The immense spans over which the telegraph wires have been carried from hill to hill in this region are very remarkable. All along the route we were following the three telegraph lines run, one belonging to the Shah, and two to the Indo-European Company. Along them travels to England the news of India and our Australian colonies; along them is being flashed to the cities in the interior of Persia the news of the world, to which in other ways they remain as inaccessible as ever.

It was seven o'clock, and quite dark when we reached the top of the *kotal*, and we had to stumble along by the light of a candle for another hour before we reached a ruined tower, where what is called "the Guard of the Road" resides. Here it was proposed we should pitch the tent, but our caravan was still a long way behind, and my wife and I much doubted if it would ever succeed in getting up the difficult road in the dark, though we were assured it would. Sure enough, in three-quarters of an hour, we heard the tinkle of the mules' bells, and in they came in perfect order.

A fire was soon lighted; the Guard of the

Road and his friends looked a ferocious lot of individuals by the red glow of its embers, as they crowded round them, and partook of their evening meal with the servants.

The remembrance of the sight which presented itself to me when I first emerged from our tent the next morning will remain with me for ever. We were right amongst the mountains; the first pink streaks of dawn were just appearing, the moon and stars were still out, the air was fresh and crisp, around were numerous almond-trees, all in full blossom, looking as if they had been dusted all over with flakes of pink and white, while every now and then the cry of the cuckoo could be heard.

In the valley of Dasth-i-Bam, which we traversed before ascending the last of the *kotals*, is a forest of dwarf oaks, which have unusually long acorns, some I picked up measuring two inches in length. The Kotal-i-Pir-i-zan, or "Kotal of the Old Woman," is the longest of the four. From the valley we ascended 3000 feet, and its summit is 7000 feet above the sea-level. In sheltered parts there were still large collections of snow about; near the top we disturbed a party of vultures feasting off a dead mule. The descent into the valley of Dasht-i-Arzen, "The Plain of the Wild

Almond," was short and steep. In the centre of the valley is a lake with numerous wild fowl. I also first noticed here the Persian crow, which has a grey body and black head and wings. On arriving at the telegraph station, in which no one was at that time resident, the native attendant presented us with a beautiful bunch of jonquils. They grow wild in the valley, and we had seen the plants, not yet in flower, as we had passed through ; these had been taken from a sheltered place in the telegraph station's garden. I found afterwards the gift of the flowers was a prelude to my treating an ulcer on his leg, and supplying medicine for his children.

As night closed in, the verandah of the telegraph station was besieged by an immense flight of swallows, who quarrelled and fought for the nests in the roof, several of them falling into our room.

Encamped by the village was a body of Persian soldiers, and a miserably ragged lot they were : we passed them on the march the next day. They straggled over some three or four miles of the road ; it was a decidedly "go-as-you-please" business with them. They had donkeys, upon which many of them had piled their muskets ; few if any seemed to have a complete suit of uniform ;

some had a ragged, blue cotton coat, turned back with red, and most had a metal lion and sun in their caps. The officers we met all riding together, quite separate from the men; they had not the least attempt at uniform in their costume.

About Dast-i-Arzen is the region in which lions are reported to still exist—the maneless lion of Persia; they avoid the caravan routes, and we saw nothing of them. We had frequently to congratulate ourselves that our journey had occurred at such a favourable time of the year.

Abed pointed out to us the wide detours he had had to make when coming down from Ispahan a few weeks previously, on account of the impassable condition of the roads, due to melting snow. Soon after leaving Dast-i-Arzen we came across an immense bog, in which the *sise*, who went first to test the road, was immersed up to his neck, but came out smiling as usual.

The caravanseri at Khan-i-Zinian was filled with the soldiers whom we had met on the march. They are dreadful robbers; being so badly paid, they consider themselves entitled to whatever they can lay their hands on: the villagers dread their approach. We decided, therefore, not to put up at the caravanseri, but to go on further

and pitch the tent, which we did with much fear that we should get a soaking before night was through, for the most vivid sheet-lightning was playing, and we could hear the growl of distant thunder. Fortunately the storm did not come our way, and the next day we rode into Shiraz.

The approach to Shiraz from the south is disappointing. When you first catch sight of the green of its gardens, and the blue domes of its mosques, you think, another hour at the most, and you will be in the haven to which all your hopes and expectations have been directed for the last few days; instead of which it is really eleven miles off, and you go on, trudging between the high mud walls of its numerous gardens, thinking every turn ought to lead you straight into the city.

"Where Time the measure of his hours,
By changeful bud and blossom keeps,
And, like a young bride crowned with flowers,
Fair Shiraz in her garden sleeps."— *Whittier.*

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAIREST JEWEL OF IRAN.

SHIRAZ is the most important town of Southern Persia, and is the capital of the large province of Fars.

It is a city surrounded by gardens filled with fruit-trees, lying in an arid plain, bounded by brown rocky mountains. The fruit-trees at the time of our visit were in full blossom, and their delicate colouring formed a pretty contrast to the sombre green of the cyprus-trees, which are very numerous.

Shiraz is famous for its roses and bulbuls, or nightingales, for both of which we were too early; also for its being the birthplace of two of a poetical nation's greatest poets—the philosophic Sadi, and the jovial Hafiz. Their tombs stand a short distance outside the town, surrounded by cyprus-trees, and are the objects of much reverence to the devout Shirazes.

"Where to her poet's turban stone,
The Spring her gift of flowers imparts,
Less sweet than those his thoughts have sown
In the warm soil of Persian hearts."—*Whittier.*

The sayings of these two poets are in the mouths of all Persians, as those of Shakespeare are in ours.

The city of Shiraz itself is now but a ghost of its former self; its walls are in ruins, its roadways and avenues are broken, and its mosques and palaces are crumbling to decay. It still, however, boasts of an extensive Bazaar, which claims to be the finest in Persia, in which a busy throng of jostling mules, donkeys, closely-veiled women, and turbaned men is daily to be seen.

In a country like Persia, where the difficulties of transit are so great, the characteristics of the inhabitants of the different cities come to be markedly different. Those of the natives of Shiraz are the ones which approve themselves most to the majority of Europeans.

The people of Shiraz are light-hearted and gay; more generous and jovial than the morose and fanatical characters I afterwards had so much to do with in Ispahan.

The great delight of the inhabitants of Shiraz is

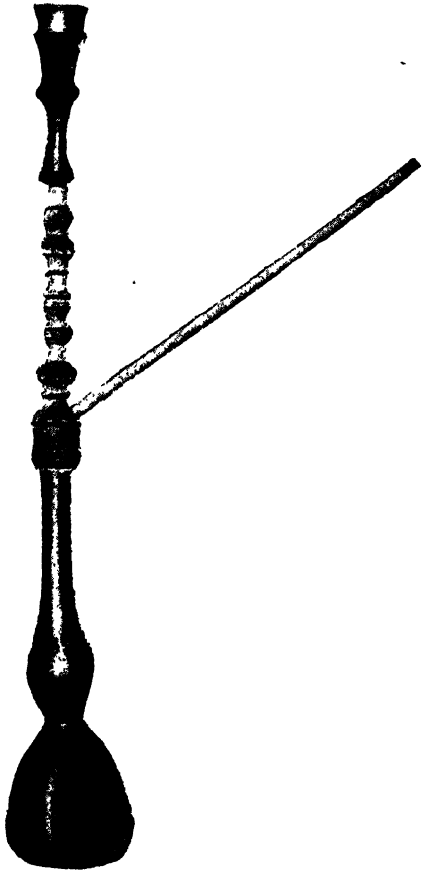
in their gardens, where they like to lie and bask in the shade, with the air around them heavy with the perfume of roses, while they listen to the plashing of the running water in its marble basins, the melody of the bulbul, or the recitation of an ode of their beloved Hafiz.

My wife in Shiraz was able to walk through the Bazaar, without being mobbed or shouted at, as she would have been had she attempted to do so in Ispahan.

Wine, which is often considered the inevitable accompaniment of joviality and merriment, is largely made in Persia. The vineyards of Shiraz are the most famous, the alternation of the extreme cold in winter with great heat in summer being specially suited for them. They seem to have existed from very ancient times, and a story, which is well worth quoting, attributes to the famous king Jemsheed the discovery of wine. He was immoderately fond of grapes, and desired to preserve some, which were placed in a large vessel and lodged in a vault for further use. When the vessel was opened the grapes had fermented; their juice was so acid that the king believed it must be poison. He had some bottles filled with it, and "Poison" written on them.

These were placed in his room. It happened that one of his favourite ladies was affected with nervous headaches. The pain distracted her so much that she took a bottle of the fermented juice and swallowed its contents. The wine (for such it had become) overpowered the lady, who fell into a sound sleep, and awoke much refreshed. Delighted with the remedy, she repeated the doses so often that the king's "poison" was all drunk. He soon discovered this, and forced the lady to confess what she had done. A quantity of wine was made, and Jemsheed and all his court drank of the beverage, which, from the manner of its discovery, is to this day known in Persia by the name *Zeher-e-khoosh*, or "The delightful poison." They manufacture a red and white wine, the latter exceedingly strong, which is considered by them one of its chief recommendations, also a very coarse form of spirit, called arrak. As soon as made, the wine is placed in earthenware jars, and never goes into wood: as a rule, it is drunk quite new. None that I tasted, either at Shiraz or elsewhere, had any aroma or flavour the least approaching a European wine. Europeans resident there have sometimes matured some in old sherry casks, which they say im-

proves it wonderfully. The Koran, to its honour, forbids the drinking of all inebriating



THE KALIAN OR WATER PIPE.

liquors. Many Mohammedans interpret this to mean only the partaking of them to excess; but

the more strict and devout refuse to touch wine or spirits at all. The Koranic law has had the effect throughout Persia of preventing the sale of spirituous liquors in places of refreshment, either in the Bazaars or on the highway. Such men as our charvadars, who in England could do nothing without their pot of beer, are content with a suck at the *kalian*, or waterpipe, and a cup of tea—hot, strong, and very sweet—but still only tea; and this, too, after a long day's journey, either in the scorching heat of the summer sun or the deadly cold of winter. During the whole four months I was in Persia I never saw a Mohammedan drunk. What drinking there is—and I believe there is a good deal amongst the richer classes—is carried on out of sight behind the high walls of the anderun.

Several crafts flourish at Shiraz; one of the chief of these is the engraving of silver goods with a beautiful repoussé work. Numerous figures of men and animals are represented, most, if not all, copied from those found in ancient rock sculptures, and on the stones at Persepolis. The whole surface of the articles thus worked is covered with these figures. Salt-cellars, pepper and mustard pots, serviette rings, frames, milk-jugs, and

such-like articles are made for European customers. The silver employed is very soft and very pure, the art of making an alloy not being known. It is all, however, imported into Persia, no silver mines being worked in the country.

We had a large variety of articles brought for our inspection by a merchant, several of which we purchased. The method of arriving at the price of them was very simple. A pair of scales was produced, and the article we bought was placed in one side of them; it was then balanced on the other side by krans—this fixed the value of the silver. An equal number of krans was then added for the workmanship, and finally we took off a small amount for the salesman having come later than was appointed.

Another art carried on largely at Shiraz is what is called "Hatem Kari," a mosaic work something like the Tunbridge Wells ware of this country, only with small pieces of bone, ivory, silver and brass worked in with the different coloured woods. Specimens of work of almost a precisely similar kind are often seen in this country, coming from India.

The best saddle-bags come from Shiraz. These useful articles are, for travelling, to a Persian,

what a portmanteau is to an European. They are most familiar to English people in connection with armchairs. The squares of carpet which form the outer surfaces of the bags are of such a convenient shape for the seat and back of a chair; whilst the *gelim*, which in the bags forms the side which goes next the animal, is frequently utilised in the chair to line its sides and back. The mouths of the bags are fastened by several loops of coloured cord, the final one being secured by a padlock; even these are retained in some chairs in the form of a decorative plat at the back.

A new Governor had, at the *No Ruz*, or New Year's Day just preceding our visit, been appointed to rule over the province of Fars, of which Shiraz is the capital. The system of government in Persia now is much like that which Darius Hystaspes describes on the famous Rock of Behistoon as having been established by him B.C. 250. Most truly was it said that "the laws of the Medes and Persians altereth not."

Darius Hystaspes, on ascending the throne, found himself at the head of an immense empire, comprising numerous nations, having different customs and creeds. He therefore divided it up

into provinces, to each of which a governor, called by the Greeks a Satrap, was appointed. These Satraps were responsible for the collection of the taxes in their provinces, and for the payment of them to the Crown. Many of them lived in regal splendour, so that Darius became aptly termed "The king of kings," by which grand title the Shah of Persia is still addressed.

The governors of some of the provinces in Persia now are princes of royal blood. Governors, however, are not appointed on account of any particular capacity they may possess for the post, but by the size of the present which they are willing to give the Shah, over and above the amount which has been fixed for generations as the revenue of that particular province. The posts are in fact put up to the highest bidder. The term of office is for one year, at the end of which time a fresh present has to be forthcoming, or some one else is appointed.

On New Year's Day the Shah sends to each newly-appointed governor a "coat of honour," or *kaliat*. The messenger who brings it is treated in the whole course of his journey with marked respect, and is given a handsome present on his arrival by the recipient of the coat. The

privilege of carrying these coats of honour is looked upon as a source of income, and is granted by the Shah to those to whom he is in debt, or those whom he wishes to enrich. It is sometimes afterwards sold to another, by him to whom it was originally granted, should he for some reason not wish to undertake the journey.

Such being the corrupt way the government of the country is carried on by the king himself, it is not to be wondered at that corruption rides rampant through the length and breadth of his dominions.

The governors who have bought their posts have to recompense themselves during their term of office. They do so by selling the posts under them, which they have at their disposal. Even the officers of the army buy their positions, or, as a Persian would prettily put it, "receive them in exchange for a present." Ultimately the money has to be found by taxation of the peasants and workers. Though taxed thus heavily to maintain their rulers, the amount of taxation taken altogether is not so much as in this country. They have not to contribute to the maintenance or establishment of public works, for there are none. There are no roads to keep repaired. A bridge, if it falls

into decay, goes on decaying until it tumbles down altogether. It is nobody's business to build or repair it. A munificent benefactor may build another one; otherwise those who have to cross the stream will do so by a more circuitous route. There are no large lunatic asylums or convict prisons to maintain. No one is kept in prison longer than a year; at the end of that time a prisoner is either liberated or shot! Sewers, street lighting, public parks, etc., to which in England the working-man has to subscribe his share, are luxuries which are unknown in Persia. In fact, life is so simple that, beyond the maintenance of those who are chosen to govern them in the greatest luxury, and of the army, there is nothing for which they have to pay.

While in Shiraz we were the guests of Dr Scully, the medical officer of the Indo-European Telegraph, who entertained us with the proverbial Irish hospitality. His house is located a little way outside the city, and stands, together with those of the other officials of the telegraph, in a large garden; he has a small dispensary close to his house, where he sees patients on certain mornings in the week, and distributes medicines gratuitously. In this way, by supplying medical aid where it is

so sorely needed, the Telegraph Company have sought to ingratiate themselves with the inhabitants of the country, to secure their permanence in it, and also the more favourable reception of their European employés. Stone in the bladder is a common affection at Shiraz, and both Dr Scully and Dr Odling, who preceded him, and who is now in Teheran, have cured many cases. They have both found it advisable before undertaking any major operation to get the patient to sign, or rather apply his seal to a statement that they shall not be held responsible for any untoward result which may follow. Dr Scully asked me to go with him to see the *Mullah bashi*, or head priest who was suffering from failure of sight. We rode to his house, which was in the city, through many winding lanes, which were a sea of liquid mud, between high mud walls. Arrived there, we passed through an ante-room crowded with attendants, and were ushered into his presence. He was seated on his heels, with nine other old men round the sides of the room. Two chairs were produced for us, and some exceedingly sweet tea, which was afterwards followed by a variety of sweetmeats and oranges. Having partaken of some of these delicacies, I proceeded

to examine the priest's eyes, and also those of the other old gentlemen who had assembled for that purpose. It so happened that nearly all of them would require an operation, either now or at some future date, for the restoration of their sight. It was interesting to watch how their faces seemed to drop, as, on the conclusion of my examination, each one had his sentence pronounced on him in appropriate language by Dr Scully. All of them rose and bowed as we took our departure, which, I was told, was a great act of condescension on the priest's part; but this was all I received for the examination of his and his friends' eyes.

One of the old gentlemen, who had for some years been governor of Kazerun, subsequently was brought up to me in *Kajawas*, to Julfa. He had cataracts, and the sight in one eye had been completely destroyed by the ill success of a native operator. He was a cheery old fellow, whom it was a pleasure to treat. I succeeded in restoring the sight of his remaining eye, and I shall not forget his cry of delight when I first put up a glass, and he found he was able to read the Koran, "*Alhamdullelah! Alhamdullelah!*" "Praise God! Praise God!" he kept shouting. He sent me a present, which was brought in a large

tray, containing a number of little saucers; each saucer had some sort of spice or nut in it, except the centre one, which contained twenty tomans in kran pieces. Across the top of the saucers was laid a walking-stick, which he hoped I would take with me to London, so that I might sometimes think of him when I got home again. When I left him he was preparing to go on a pilgrimage to Meshed, where he wished to return thanks for the recovery of his sight, and to pray for me.

During the two days we stayed at Shiraz there were many heavy showers of rain; these, together with the condition to which the roads were reduced by them, much impeded sight-seeing. I did not however consider it right to delay longer, so we started off again on the 1st April, with a beautifully clear and cloudless sky, after a night of thunder and lightning.

On leaving Shiraz, and proceeding northward, you pass through an archway and ascend up a pass, the name of which is Teng-i-Allahu-Akbar, "The pass of God is the most great." These are the words which are supposed to rise involuntarily to the lips of a pious Mohammedan when, on coming from the north, he here first catches a glimpse of "the fairest jewel of Iran," lying spread out

before him. We turned to take a final look at this city of charms and delights, of which so much has been beautifully written. Two or three weeks later it would have looked better; the tender green was not yet sufficiently advanced, and the vineyards were still but dry sticks.

Still we could well imagine the greatest heathen shouting with joy on suddenly coming on its blue domes, minarets, and its pleasant gardens, after traversing the series of dry and desolate valleys we were about to cross.

CHAPTER V.

TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

A LITTLE way outside Shiraz are some mounds. They mark the site at which one of the most cruel forms of torture that can well be imagined was carried out. Live men were built up in towers of cement, their heads alone protruding, and thus left to die a lingering death. It is an ancient form of punishment in Persia, spoken of as "tree-planting," which was revived by the eunuch Governor of Ispahan, Manuchar Khan, who enjoyed an unenviable reputation for the ingenuity of his tortures.

The heavy rains that fell while we were at Shiraz had, we found, done considerable damage to the village of Zargun, which we reached the following night. It is a largish village, standing close up against the mountain side, from which it can hardly be distinguished until you get quite close to it, the houses, built of mud bricks, being of

the same brown colour. The mud roofs of the houses, unless kept properly rolled, get very soft from saturation with moisture after heavy rains, and tend to collapse: several had done so at Zargun, and in passing through its narrow streets we had to climb over many recently fallen houses on our horses. The posting-house was partly ruined, and what was left of it was occupied by the Governor of Shiraz on his way to Teheran.

We therefore had our tent pitched on the outskirts of the village. Here we were destined to remain for the whole of the following day and the next morning, for news was brought that a stream which we should have to cross about six miles further on was much swollen and impassable, two camels in attempting to ford it having been carried away.

Every European is regarded in Persia as a doctor, or *hakim*, by the natives, and travellers find themselves consulted about all sorts of maladies, implicit faith being put in whatever they recommend or prescribe.

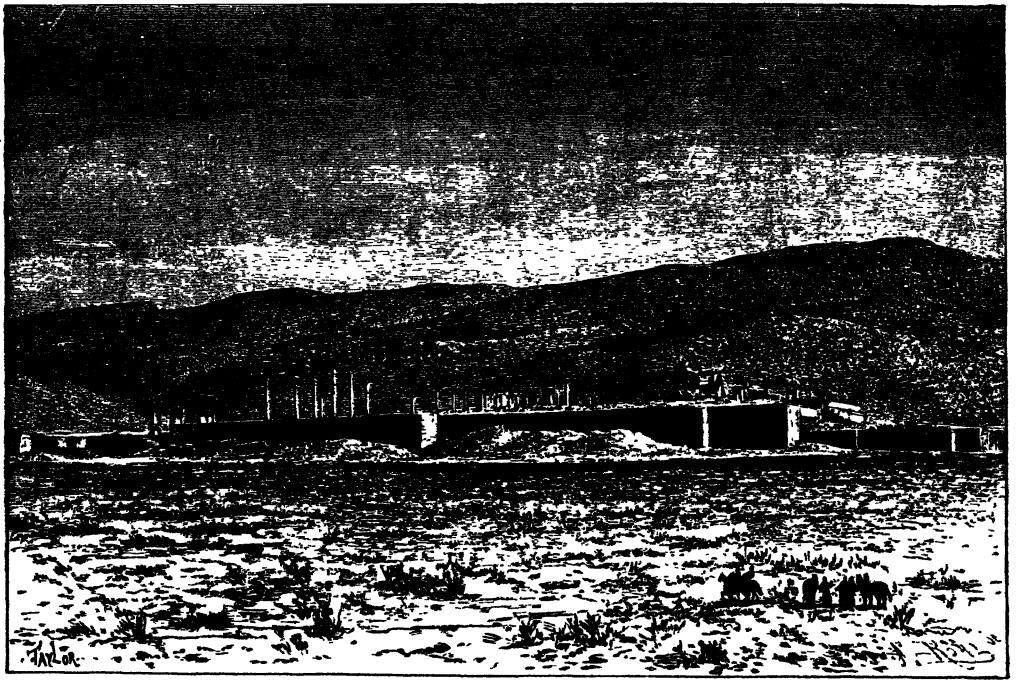
The villagers of Zargun soon found out—I suppose through our servants—that I was a real *hakim*, sent for by the Prince, and they descended on our tent in crowds. By far the majority of

them were suffering from granular ophthalmia. I commenced treating a few, and giving such remedies as I had handy. This brought such a heap more that my servants begged me to desist. To have effected a cure in most cases a long course of skilful application of caustic would have been necessary, and they crowded so on my tent that I gave up trying to do anything. The women did not wear any veils, but kept the *chadar*, or shawl, which envelops the head and body, held in front of the lower part of the face. They would come and squat down beside me, looking exactly like a heap of rags, and wait patiently, gazing up at my face, now and then pointing to their eyes until I took some notice of them. If frightened off by Abed or Mahmood throwing a lump of earth in their direction, they would cut and run like a flock of sheep, and then, having got to a safe distance, halt, turn round, and stare again, and by degrees work their way up to us once more. I found one very effectual way of getting rid of them was to shout out in Persian for cold water, when they would at once move off. I did this first quite innocently, wishing to wash a child's eyes around which there was much discharge: the mother immediately took it away.

This delay at Zargun was very annoying, because, if we could have anticipated it, we might have seen more of Shiraz. Old Hadji, our muleteer, passed the time by having his head shaved.

At last, at twelve o'clock on the second day, having received no fresh news as to the state of the stream during the morning, I decided we would go and inspect it for ourselves, and if we could not get over, camp on the margin. Before reaching the swollen river we traversed, by means of a series of causeways, a long swampy plain, and encountered an immense swarm of midges. The Governor of Shiraz's people were careering wildly about the swamp, shooting at wild fowl.

We crossed the Bundamir stream (which Moore has rendered famous by his pretty and imaginary description) by a well-built bridge, and came to the one which had caused the delay. It was a swiftly flowing river of exceedingly muddy water between two high mud banks. Several men on the opposite one to us, at our approach, took off the few garments they had on, and plunged into the river, I suppose to show us they were ready to render assistance should we need it. Abbas at once rode his mule right through,



GENERAL VIEW OF PERSEPOLIS.

and by tucking up his legs got across safely, only his saddle-bags getting wet. We followed, the water being above our saddle flaps. The *sise*, regardless of his clothes, would insist on leading "Khanum's" horse well into the water. We were now getting to historic ground. We were in the large plain of Mervdasht, in which Persepolis once stood in all its glory—Persepolis, the very heart of Persia proper, whose treasure houses under the Achæmenian kings contained one of the largest accumulations of wealth the world has ever known.

It was into this plain that Alexander the Great had such a difficulty to gain access after the battle of Arbela, in which he completely routed the immense forces which Darius Codomanus had collected against him, that unfortunate monarch himself being the first to seek safety in flight. Alexander having received the submission of the Babylonians, and out-manœuvred the warlike Uxii, arrived at the Susian Gates leading to the plain of Mervdasht. Here he met with a stout resistance, and finally reached the plain by another route, after a difficult and trying march through the snow over the surrounding heights.

The palaces and their treasures now lay at his

mercy. The latter is stated by Diodorus as amounting to 120,000 talents of gold and silver (£27,600,000 sterling). Moved to vengeance by the sight of 800 Grecian captives, all of whom had been mutilated either by the loss of a limb, or of an eye or ear, and wishing to revenge on this, the very heart of Iran, the wrongs which had been done by Xerxes a century and a half before by the destruction of Grecian temples, he ordered the palace to be burnt, and permitted his soldiers to pillage and murder the surrounding inhabitants. Some state that it was while he was inebriated after a banquet, urged on by the courtesan Thasis, that he commanded the palaces to be fired, and that, accompanied by her, himself commenced the conflagration, which incident forms the theme of Dryden's celebrated poem of "Alexander's Feast: or, The Power of Music":—

"'Twas at the royal feast of Persia, won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft in awful state
The god-like hero sate
On his imperial throne;
The valiant peers were placed around;
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound
(So should desert in arms be crowned).
The lovely Thasis by his side

Sate, like a blooming Eastern bride,
In flower of youth and beauty's pride,
Happy, happy, happy pair,
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserve the fair.
Revenge, revenge, Timotheus cries,
See the Furies arise;
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in the hair,
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes.
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand.
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain.
And unburied remain,
Inglorious on the plain,
Give the vengeance due
To the gallant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy,
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy.
Thasis led the way
To light to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy."

We diverged à little from the route, in order to visit the ruins of Persepolis. Time did not permit of our making a long stay, or of our going to the hill Nakhs-i-Rustem, which is situated in the same

plain, and contains the royal tombs. We had hoped to have camped for the night at the throne of Jemsheed, as the Persians call Persepolis, but the delay occasioned by the swollen stream had prevented this. I am only able to give an outline sketch of some of the beauties which these interesting ruins present.

It was a glorious morning when we started from the little village of Kmareh, one of the few which now remain in this once populous district. The sky was brilliantly blue, just flecked with white clouds; the atmosphere indescribably clear, and a cool, invigorating breeze blew across the plain, while the melody of countless little crested ground-larks was a welcome addition to the other charms of the morning.

The palaces, which 2500 years ago were the glory of the Achæmenian dynasty, stand on a platform fronting the plain, and are backed by a rocky and precipitous range of hills. This platform, which measures 312 yards in width and about 500 yards in length, is composed partly of the native rock and partly of immense blocks of stone, originally held together by iron rivets, the depressions for which can still be seen, but which have long since been removed. The platform is

reached from the plain by a staircase, which, from the breadth of its steps and the gentleness of its ascent, calls forth the admiration of all who see it. As has often been pointed out, a man on horseback can ascend and descend it without difficulty, and ten men abreast could mount it at the same time. It formed a striking contrast to the steep flight of steps I later on ascended to visit His August Majesty of the present day at one of his summer palaces on the outskirts of Teheran.

Different portions of the platform, and the buildings on it, are situated at different levels, and the different elevations are reached by staircases, having the same exquisite proportions as the one leading from the plain. Interpretation of the cuneiform inscriptions which the buildings contain has rendered evident their nature and the names of their founders.

The chief buildings, of which these ruins are the remains, consist of the following: At the head of the staircase from the plain, the Propylæa, or Gateway of Xerxes; and on the same level with it, at the back of the platform, is the Hall of One Hundred Columns. At the front of the platform, on a higher level, is the Hypostile Hall of Xerxes; on a higher level still, the palaces

of Darius and Xerxes, and other buildings, the nature of which is less certain. In the rock of the mountain, behind the platform, are some royal tombs.

The number of figures carved on these buildings is enormous; and, notwithstanding the exposure to climate, the effects of earthquakes, the incendiarism of Alexander and his followers, and the image-breaking tendencies of the fanatical Arabs who overran Iran in the seventh century, they, many of them, stand out to-day as sharp and clear as though they were fresh cut. In places, too, the mark of the chisel, where the sculptor has been at work, is clearly visible.

This wonderful state of preservation after such an immense lapse of time is doubtless due to the quality of the stone and the extreme dryness of the air. The stone, evidently quarried from the hills around, is an exceedingly hard limestone of a grey colour, varying in tone, with yellow streaks in places running through it; when polished, it presents a beautiful appearance like marble.

The long rows of figures, arranged in processional form around the base of the buildings and up the sides of the staircases, are, when first seen, unintelligible and confusing, but all these,

together with those in the palaces of the kings, are on further examination and consideration seen to present a oneness in composition which is exceedingly remarkable. The one theme which these figures go to represent, and the one idea which is dominant throughout the arrangement and sculpture of these remarkable buildings, is the greatness and glory of one man: "The Great King," "The King of kings," "The King of all inhabited countries," "The King of this great earth, far and near," as the cuneiform inscriptions proudly term him. Not only do these sculptures help to make us realise the might, the glory, and the power of these Eastern monarchs, but the processions of figures show us the uses for which the gigantic halls, such as the Hypostile Hall of Xerxes and the Hall of One Hundred Columns were intended.

Some of the columns of the former still stand towering upwards 60 feet high ; those of the latter, the one which Alexander in his drunken freak permitted to be burnt, all lie shattered.

In them the King of kings held his court, receiving, as is shown in the sculptures, the representatives and tribute-bearers from the numerous subject kingdoms.

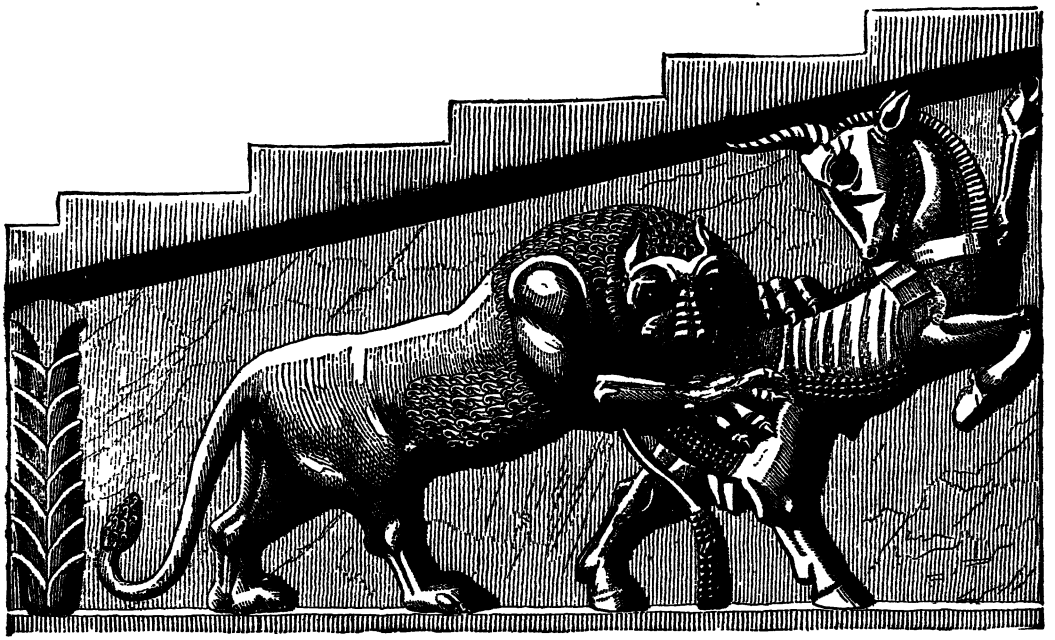
We see them, in their different national garbs, bearing presents from the nethermost parts of the earth—tusks of ivory, ingots of gold, skins of animals, the famed horses of Armenia, the humped oxen from India, and the doubled-humped camels from Bactria.

The Median court, we are told, had been grand, but the Persian court outdid it in magnificence and extent. None could count on advancement who did not show themselves at the gate of the king. The nobility learnt there, in the shadow of the throne of the great ruler, not only obedience, but how to conduct themselves modestly, and with self-control.

In the sculptures we see represented the king himself, distinguished from all the other figures by his greater height. He is seated on his throne beneath a gorgeously embroidered canopy, his long hair and beard plaited, his attendants and guards about him. One of the former holds a fly-chaser over his head, the latter are armed with bows and arrows, shields and spears. In the palace of Darius there are several representations of the king. In one place as he walks along an attendant behind shields him from the sun's rays with a sunshade, much like those of modern



COMBAT OF KING AND MONSTER (SCULPTURE AT PERSEPOLIS).



RELIEF ON THE STEPS OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS

construction; in others he is engaged in single combat with various strange-looking animals, such as a unicorn and a griffin standing erect, which he is in the act of stabbing.

A subject in the sculptures several times repeated is that of a combat between a lion and a bull. The lion is depicted grasping the hind-quarters of the bull in its mouth; it probably had some allegorical meaning. The royal tombs at the back of Persepolis are situated at some height in the rock, and I had to climb up a steep incline of loose stones and earth to reach the entrance of the sepulchral chamber. It is evident that in the case of exalted personages the teaching of Zoroaster, as given in the Avesta, was not strictly adhered to. It is probable that after the conquest of Assyria by the Persians, when they learnt the methods of burial customary in that country, these rock-tombs were adopted for the kings; the contact and defilement of the sacred earth by the body being avoided by embalming it in wax.

The face of the rock above and around the entrance chamber of the tomb is elaborately carved. The king is depicted on a platform, supported by two separate rows of attendants; he stands with a bow in his hand before a fire altar,

while above him is a representation of Ormuzd, the good spirit of Zoroastrianism, and in the corner behind Ormuzd a disc is carved to represent the sun. Ormuzd here, and also in the palaces of the kings, is depicted with the head, arms, and the upper part of the body of a man; he wears a head-dress similar to that of the king, and, like him, has long plaited hair and beard. In one hand he holds a ring, and the other is extended. From his waist proceeds a feathered skirt, no feet or legs are shown; feathered wings extend in front and behind him; around the centre of his body is a large ring like a life-buoy, and from his waist hang down two streamers, which may be meant for the ends of a girdle.

In the chamber, which is hollowed out of the solid rock, are two immense stone sarcophagi.

On descending from the tomb I came across a place where the ground was alive with young locusts. The sight of them made the Persian peasant who was walking with me commence to curse and swear. Many of the crops had been eaten up by them the previous year, and the appearance of them again thus early foreboded ill. Before leaving the platform, we passed again by the



PROPYLÆA OR GATEWAY OF XERXES AT PERSEPOLIS.

remains of the imposing porch, or Propylæa, as it has been termed, which a visitor first encounters on reaching the head of the staircase from the plain.

It has two pairs of colossal animals, some 17 to 18 feet high and 20 to 21 feet long, the front parts of which are carved in the round, on masses of masonry, composed of huge blocks of limestone. One pair is typically Assyrian in character, being winged bulls with men's heads crowned with tiaras, the hair and beards of which are long and have numerous little curls. The other pair are probably bull-headed, but the heads and faces of all the figures at Persepolis are the parts which have been most broken. These two pairs of animals face different ways, one towards the plain, the other towards the mountains behind; in the space between them are the remains of four fluted columns, two of which are still standing. Above the animals is a trilingual inscription, stating that, through the grace of Ormuzd, Xerxes constructed this gateway.

It is not difficult to imagine this building in its entirety, and to realise what a fitly awe-inspiring introduction it must have formed, with its grim massive monsters and lofty gateways, to the

immense hall where the great king held his audiences, amid a forest of columns, rich hangings, and elaborate ceremonials.

After leaving Persepolis we soon regained the regular caravan route. The ruins of the ancient city of Istakhr, which was a great centre of commerce when Persepolis was in its glory, and continued a town of importance long after the Mohammedan invasion, lay to our left. We stopped for luncheon at the remains of the fortified gateway of Istakhr, which is composed of massive stone blocks like those of the buildings on the platform at Persepolis. The parts of the gateway still standing show that there was a central roadway divided into two, and at the sides two narrower passages for foot-passengers; the lintel of one of the latter remains in position. These huge blocks of stone, hewn so many years ago, are thickly clothed with associations of most striking times in history. What countless generations of men must have passed to and fro through this gateway since first it was erected! The Achæmenian kings would have passed beneath its arch in their chariots, as they and their court journeyed from Ecbatana, the capital of Media, to their spring residence at Persepolis.

Alexander and his army of Macedonian heroes, glutted with the spoils of Persepolis, and burning for fresh and greater glories, would have gone through it on their way north, previous to the conquest of Central Asia. Through it must have streamed the Parthians in their suits of chain armour, riding bare-backed steeds, and carrying desolation and destruction, born of barbarism, before them. In the ensuing centuries it must have witnessed many a struggle between these nomad idolaters and the worshippers of Ormuzd, and again after a long lapse of years it was stoutly defended by the Persians against the Arabs, furious with fanatical ire.

We continued our journey along the banks of the river Polvar to Sivend, a prettily situated town on the slope of a hill, with numerous vineyards around. There is a large telegraph station there, the clerk in charge of which was out mending the wires at the time of our visit. It is a lonely station for an Englishman to occupy, there being no other European for miles around for him to speak to. The only water we could obtain for our tea and for washing in was from the river, which, owing to the melting snow on the mountains, was of the consistency and colour of pea-soup.

Throughout Persia a large amount of water is obtained and conveyed for many miles by what are termed *kanats*. These are a system of underground streams. The water arising originally from some mountain stream, which, in the natural state, would after a short course soon become evaporated or absorbed by the porous dry earth, is conveyed along in underground channels, which are kept clear by means of numerous deep wells leading down to them, situated about twenty or thirty yards apart. The wells are simply deep holes dug out, their sides not being in any way bricked up; they frequently give way, and the streams often become blocked. The clearance of these *kanats*, on which some of the villages depend entirely for their water, is a constant source of employment to the inhabitants. One man goes down the well, fills a skin with earth, and another one above hauls it up with a rope and a flimsily-constructed wooden wheel. These *kanats*, either still in use or dried up and abandoned, are met with in all directions; they frequently lie along the side of the road, and are a constant source of danger to travellers, especially on dark nights. There would not be much chance of escape for the unfortunate individual who fell

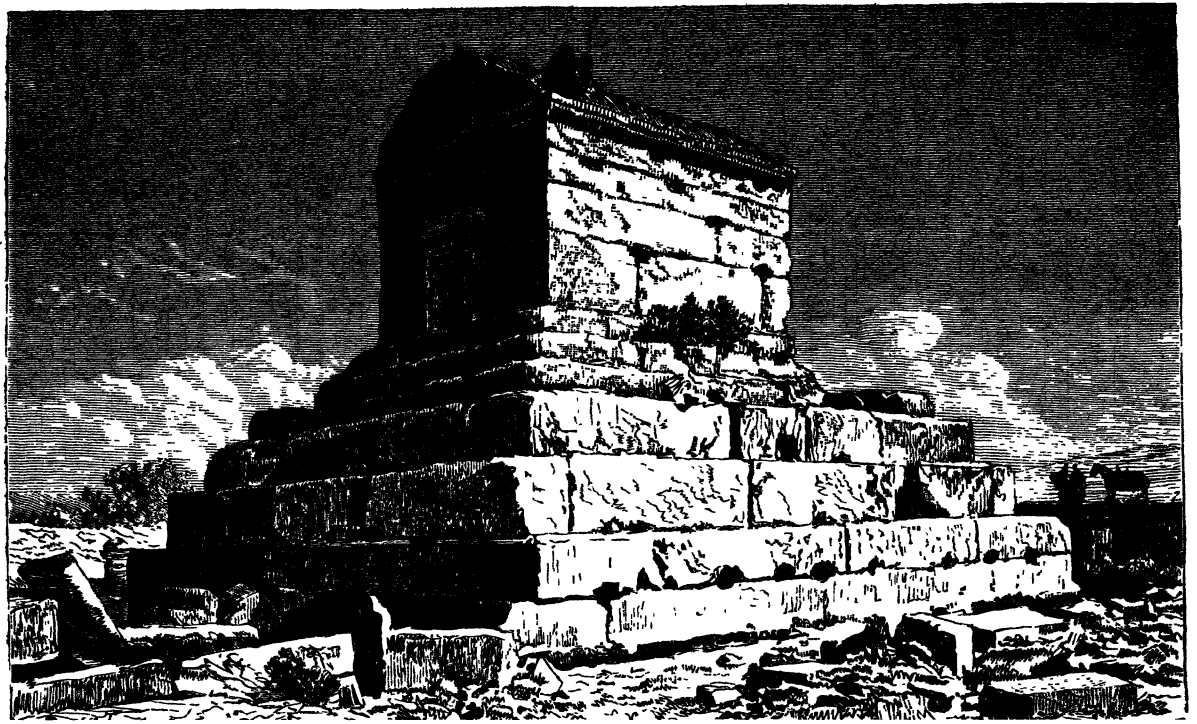
unobserved into one. I was told several accounts of accidents which had occurred in connection with them.

On leaving Sivend we passed numbers of nomads' tents, made of black goats' hair; they stand out very plainly, and can be seen for a great distance against the mountain side. The nomad population of Persia is very large. They are an independent race of people, and recognise no authority except that of their own chiefs, who are held responsible for them, and who pay a certain annual tribute to the Shah. They change their place of residence according to the time of year, during the winter seeking the shelter and warmth of the vales, and in the heat of the summer the cool fresh breezes of the mountains. Their chief source of wealth is like that of the Biblical patriarchs of old, "in their flocks and in their herds"; their sheep, their goats, their mules, their horses. The women, who go about with short skirts and bare legs, and are not nearly so particular in screening their faces from view as are the dwellers in the towns and villages, weave the carpets of those excellent colours and designs so much prized in England.

Effective pictures are sometimes drawn by contrasting the East End of London hovel, where

the work-girl lives and stitches for a miserable pittance at the dress of the lady of fashion, with the mansion in Kensington or the West, where the same dress is subsequently displayed by its wearer amidst the greatest luxury and splendour. The contrast between the poor surroundings of these carpets as they are being made, and the sumptuous abodes in Europe which they subsequently decorate, is even greater. We watched the women in their black tents at work upon them. The loom they use is of the simplest and roughest description. It consists of two stakes driven into the ground in an upright position, between which are fastened two horizontal poles; the distance between these two latter varies with the size of the carpet. Stretched from one horizontal pole to the other are the threads which form the foundation of the carpet; round these the worsted which forms the pile is twisted, each row as it is finished being pressed down with a comb, and when a small area is completed the pile is trimmed up to a uniform length with a large rough pair of scissors. The women we saw had no pattern whatever to guide them, they were apparently working entirely from memory.

The camel thorn is the shrub which seems



to flourish most in the plains we were traversing. To make it suitable for fodder, an article which is extremely scarce in these districts, the peasants set light to the bushes and let them burn for a short while to blunt the prickles.

We still followed along the windings of the river Polvar, or Sivend River, as it is called in the neighbourhood of that town. After passing along a narrow gorge cut out of the solid rock, where the *kajawas* had to be taken down and carried, we waded through a stream and entered a green level plain, surrounded on three sides by grassy downs, and on the fourth by high rock. This was the valley of Murghab, and in it are several interesting ruins, the remains of the ancient city of Pasargadæ. The most striking structure is what the Persians call the Gabre-Mader-i-Soleiman, "The tomb of Solomon's mother," but which there can be little doubt is really the tomb of Cyrus the Great.

The tomb itself is a plain stone rectangular structure, with a gabled roof, and not unlike a dog's kennel. It is raised a considerable height by seven layers of immense blocks of stone arranged in a pyramidal form. We climbed up these and entered, by a small doorway, the

chamber of the tomb. Arian records the contents of the chamber as seen by Aristobulus on his return with Alexander from India, as follows:—"In the chamber was a couch with feet of beaten gold, with purple coverlet, over which lay carpets of Babylonian pattern. There was also a robe and under-garments of Babylonian manufacture, and Median trousers, garments coloured blue and purple, some of one colour, some of the other, chains, swords, and necklaces of gold and precious stones, and a table. On the middle of the couch was the coffin with the corpse of Cyrus, covered with a lid." He goes on to say: "The inscription on the grave in the Persian language and the Persian letters, says:—'O men, I am Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, who founded the Empire of the Persians, and governed Asia. Do not grudge me this monument.'" The chamber is now, of course, empty. It is much resorted to by the afflicted, being supposed to have curative powers over both bodily and spiritual afflictions. Some bushes have grown up from between the masses of stone on one side of the chamber, round the branches of which numerous pieces of rag had been tied. The superstitious believe that in order to be cured of a disease it is only necessary to

remove one of these pieces of rag, and to substitute another in the same place, for the benefit of a future sufferer. In the ground adjoining the tomb many Mohammedans have been buried, and their scattered and broken gravestones lie around. If this structure is really the tomb of Cyrus, then it is one of the oldest buildings in the world outside Egypt. Cyrus the Great was the first monarch of the Achæmenian line, and commenced his reign over Iran about 550 years before Christ—500 before the landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain. He succeeded in uniting under one rule the Median and Persian nations, both of whom had sprung originally from the Aryan race. He carried his arms several times against the nations which occupied what is now known as Asia Minor. The renowned Crœsus, king of Lydia, with his untold wealth, was conquered by him, and the mighty Babylon, with its teeming population and princely halls, surrendered to his genius.

The high, thick walls by which it was surrounded would, it was thought, have rendered the city impregnable. Cyrus, however, gained access by digging a canal and diverting the course of the Euphrates, a gigantic undertaking.

He was thus enabled to walk in along the dry bed of the river and overcome Belshazzar, as is mentioned in the Book of Daniel.

Conflicting accounts are given concerning the death of Cyrus, but in all probability he was slain in battle against the tribes at the north-east corner of his dominions, on the east of the Caspian, who have always been a source of trouble to the various dynasties who have ruled Persia. This little chamber in this ancient building may be considered sacred with the memory of two of the earth's greatest warriors, for here not only lay the remains of him who was the founder of the Persian Empire, the largest the world had then known, but here, within this small space enclosed by these four bare walls, came Alexander its conqueror, who was moved to anger at finding that the last resting-place of the great king had been robbed of its adornments, and that the lid of the coffin was removed. He ordered them to be restored, and the doorway to be done away with by filling it up with stones and mortar so as to make it secure against future malefactors.

Besides other remains of ancient buildings in this plain, which time did not permit us to visit, there is a block of stone with a winged figure of a man

on it, which is generally supposed to represent the great Cyrus himself; and on the north of the plain there stands out from the hillside a platform similar, though not so extensive, to that at Persepolis, which probably like it at one time supported a palace of the kings.

In turning from these monuments, so full of memories of the heroes of the past, it was with the sincere hope that at no very distant date they may be treated with the reverence their intense antiquity deserves, and that man may at last extend a helping hand to Nature, who has so marvellously preserved them.

"Thy mighty clamorous wars and world-noised deeds
Are silent now in dust;
Gone, like the trembling of the huddling reeds,
Beneath some sudden gust.
Thy forms and creeds have vanished—
Tossed out to wither like unsightly weeds,
From the world's garden banished."—*Lowell.*

CHAPTER VI.

OUR ISTAKBAL.

At the small village of Deh-i-naw we stayed for the night in one of the native houses, composed entirely—roof, walls, and floor—of mud. The interior of the walls, like those of all the poorer native houses, were quite black from smoke. The villagers here were supposed to be great thieves, and we took special care to have all our saddles, bridles, boxes, etc., brought into our room for safety. A man on a donkey, and another on foot, had joined our caravan for protection and company since leaving Shiraz. They and our servants, seated by a fire in an adjoining hut, and all eating out of one big dish, were very merry. One of them sang songs which sounded like long continuous dismal wails.

That evening there was great excitement in the village, in consequence of a wedding. Dancing and music went on for a great part of the night.

The music consisted chiefly of the beating of a drum, and the blowing of a kind of oboe, which sounded very like bagpipes.

The next stage was a short one to Khan-i-Kirgen, where there was only a very dirty caravanseri, the best apartment in which was so dark and suggestive of vermin that I decided to tent out. This was much to the servants' disgust, for now that we had ascended so high the nights were very cold. In the caravanseri was a muleteer, who had been severely beaten by robbers a few days previously. His arm had been injured, and he was brought to me to have it examined, but I found nothing wrong with it beyond severe bruising. Soon after the tent had been pitched a dervish came, and, with great ceremony, presented us with some sweetmeat in two metal plates, refusing to depart until he had received what he considered a suitable present in return—namely, two krans. The sweetmeat was what is called *gez;* it is made from manna, which is found in several parts of the country on the leaves of trees. It is not yet decided whether it is the product of the trees, or of insects which infest them. *Gez* is something like nougat in taste, and, like it, contains pistachio nuts, but it has a harder consistency. We

liked it very much at first; but afterwards at Julfa, where I had to partake of some at every house I went into, at every hour of the day, I got heartily sick of it. From Khan-i-Kirgen to Khan-i-Koreh is a long stage. We were nine and a half hours in the saddle, only stopping for a short time at the telegraph station at Dehbid for luncheon. Dehbid was the most elevated place we passed through. Shortly after leaving it we commenced a steep descent.

We experienced great varieties of temperature in the course of the day—at one time I was glad to ride with my coat off; and a little later we were shivering in a hail-storm, and snow was lying about in the sheltered parts. The air for the last few days had been exceedingly dry, causing an unpleasant roughness of the throat and mouth. The storm made it fresh and moist. The surroundings about the deep descent after leaving Dehbid were very picturesque. The sun was setting behind rain-clouds; the mountains were rocky and bare, while numerous bubbling rills had been born into activity by the late storm. Dotted about on all sides were little bushes with a pink flower, which at the distance had much the appearance of heather.

At Khan-i-Koreh there is a caravanseri and a "chapar-khaneh," or posting-house. The "balla-khaneh," as the upper room in the latter is called, was occupied by some Persians, whom Abbas was anxious to turn out to make way for us. Abed, however, discovered another room in a building a little distance off, which we inspected by the light of a native lamp—for it was dark before we dismounted—and decided would do. The native lamps consist of little earthenware vessels, having a bright blue glaze. One side of them is contracted into a lip. Oil is placed in the vessel; and a wick lying in the oil is made to protrude and hang over the lip, the free end of it being lighted. The illumination they afford is very feeble.

Abbas became very indignant at the owner of the house wanting to charge him five krans (2/6) for a lamb, which he brought to us in great excitement, protesting there was no meat on it. The only water to be obtained was from a pond, and was full of small slugs, which, before we could wash, had to be strained off. They tried to frighten us next morning with tales of robberies which had occurred lately in the neighbourhood. I suspected that if there was any truth in what

they said, those who were talking so much were the real robbers, and refused to take a man, who had a gun, with us for the next stage, as the owner of the house tried to induce me to do.

Our road all day lay along a dreadfully dry, dreary desert, shut in by bare rocky hills on either side. The air was so clear that on reaching Surmeh we could see Khan-i-Koreh, where we started from, seven farsakhs off. A farsakh is an elastic sort of measurement; it is generally about three and a half miles. If you ask a Persian what it is, you will get one of a variety of descriptions. They usually tell you it is the distance a loaded mule will travel in an hour; some say it is the furthest distance at which you can distinguish between a white and a brown camel; others again describe it as the greatest distance at which you can hear the sound of a drum. We found it varied considerably in different parts of the country. We always had much difficulty in finding out how much further we had to go, or how far one place was from another, because our servants, in answer to our inquiries, told us what they thought was suitable to the occasion. If they thought we were tired, they diminished the distance; whereas, if they did not want us to get to a certain place, they

exaggerated it. At Surmeh we stayed for the first time at a "chapar-khaneh," or posting-house. These are places at which those who ride "chapar," or post, change horses. They are situated generally at the distance of six or seven farsakhs along the regular caravan routes throughout the country. They are built of the usual mud bricks, have a central courtyard, with mangers on three sides for horses, and stables leading off. The fourth side has a gateway, over which is situated the best room, the "bala-khaneh," access to which is gained by a flight of very steep steps, which are nearly always partly broken down. There are also rooms on either side of the doorway, and a kitchen.

An admiring crowd of people soon collected outside the "chapar-khaneh," many with eye affections who hoped for immediate and miraculous relief or cure. A dervish came with long, black tangled hair and shaggy beard; he had a leopard's skin thrown over his shoulders, and carried an immense knobbed wooden club, a horn, and a receptacle with a chain, termed a *kashkool*, for water and food.

Dervishes are as a rule great rogues; they are religious mendicants who have taken a vow of poverty; some reside permanently in towns,

others spend their lives roaming about the country. They live on the credulity of their fellow-creatures, especially the women-folk, for whom they dispense love potions, write charms for defence against the evil eye, to make the barren fruitful, or to restore the affection of a fickle husband. This one sitting in front of us commenced repeating his dismal cry of "Allah ho akbar" over and over again, every now and then stopping to make a peculiar gurgling noise like a hiccough; ultimately he went away contented with a kran.

The next day, we were glad to say, was to be the last of our monotonous long marches, for, at Abadeh, it had been arranged that a carriage should meet us. Now that the novelty of caravaning had begun to wear off, we were getting very tired of it; more especially had it become wearisome the last few days, during which we had been traversing one long uninteresting plain. Though there were said to be numerous wild animals in the hills on either side—leopards, cats, ibex, etc.—we saw nothing of them.

The only animals we encountered were little lizards exactly the same colour as the ground, which were very numerous, darting every now

and then from almost beneath our horses' feet, and some large black beetles, busily engaged in rolling about balls of horse dung—two sometimes combining in their labours.

We reached Abadeh about midday. It is a large village, but many of its houses, including the telegraph station, had been destroyed by a flood following on heavy rain during one night at the end of the previous year. The telegraph official, Sergeant Glover, was located, therefore, in a small house in the middle of the village. Thrown amongst a people who believe every Englishman to be a "medicine man," and with a natural love of doctoring, Sergeant Glover, who has been in the country since the telegraph was first laid, established a dispensary, which he informed me contained over 300 different drugs, and gained a great local reputation for his skill in the extraction of teeth. He was at the time of our visit in great grief, for all his drugs lay buried beneath the ruins of the telegraph station, and he was unable to obtain compensation for them.

It is a pleasing custom in Persia to send out a party of horsemen or others, termed an "istakbal," to meet and conduct into the town the expected guest. It dates from the very earliest times.

Morier describes as follows the istakbal with which the English Embassy was received in 1808:—

"An istakbal, composed of fifty horsemen of our Mehmandar's tribe, met us about three miles from our encampment; they were succeeded as we advanced by an assemblage on foot, who threw a glass vessel, filled with sweetmeats, beneath the Envoy's horse—a ceremony which we had before witnessed at Kazeroon, and which we again understood to be an honour shared with the king and his sons alone. Then came two of the principal merchants of Shiraz, accompanied by a boy, the son of Mahommed Nebee Khan, the new Governor of Bushire. They, however, incurred the Envoy's displeasure by not dismounting from their horses—a form always observed in Persia by those of lower rank when they meet a superior. We were thus met by three istakbals during the course of the day."

The Satib, or General, Abdullah Khan had been sent by the Prince with ten horse-soldiers and a carriage to conduct us along the remainder of our journey to Ispahan. Soon after our arrival at Abadeh the Satib called on me. He was a fine-made man, tall, and with an excellent military presence. Throughout my stay at Julfa, during which time I saw a great deal of him, he was most kind and obliging. He wore a high black

astrakan cap, with a metal representation of the lion and the sun in front of it; his clothes were of an European military cut—a grey coat with brass buttons and red facings, and blue cloth trousers. He was accompanied by another officer similarly attired, with the exception of his hat, which was of white sheepskin, and a Mulla, or priest, who was also a descendant of the Prophet or *seyd*, and wore the native flowing *abbé*, a green shawl round his waist, and a dark blue turban.

We were lodged at Abadeh in a newly-built room, remarkable for the number of its badly-fitting doors, and for the peculiar decoration of its ceiling with pieces of mirror, variously coloured glass, and common oleographs of languishing European beauties.

The Satib sent me a present of four bottles of wine, sweetmeats, and two quinces, and a short while after two immense ices. The owner of the house also sent a present of bread and biscuits; this individual, I afterwards found, required some medical advice!

Abadeh is much famed for its wood-carving. We had numerous articles brought in for our inspection — sherbet-spoons, boxes, draught-boards and pen-cases. They were all made of

pear-wood, and the only instrument used by the villagers in their manufacture and ornamentation was a pocket-knife.

The sherbet in Persia is not like the effervescing drink sold as "Real Persian Sherbet" in England. It is a syrupy, iced fluid, served up in large bowls, from which it is ladled out with the carved wooden spoons. The bowls of the spoons, which are of great depth, extremely delicate and thin, are all hollowed out of one piece of wood; on the outside of them there is generally an appropriate carved inscription from Hafiz. The handles of the best spoons have a most elaborate combination of fretwork and carving.

In the evening we rode out with the two officers to visit a garden. The Satib was mounted on a most showy white horse, with an arching neck and long graceful white tail. None of the horses in Persia are deformed by docking, and they are all entire. I subsequently had the pleasure of several times proceeding in state through the lanes of Julfa on this beautiful animal.

The Persian saddles have a very high pommel; it is the custom to sit far forwards, and to ride

with a nearly straight leg. The stirrups have large square foot-pieces, which project forwards and backwards; the angles of them are used to prod into the animals' sides like spurs. The native bits are extremely cruel, but give the riders great control over their animals. A Persian delights to pull his horse up abruptly when at a full gallop, nearly throwing it on its haunches. The bridle at the rider's end terminates in a chain which can be used as a whip.

All my conversation with the Satib had, of course, to be conducted through Abed. It seemed very strange describing to him English ways and customs amid such surroundings. On expressing my surprise to him, as we passed some of the many ruined houses, that stone, which was so abundant in the neighbourhood, was not used in their construction, he told me that a mud brick house, if properly built, would last some hundreds of years, and that there were some in Ispahan of great antiquity.

The garden had been only lately constructed by the irrigation of a piece of desert land, and had not much in it, only some recently planted fruit-trees, some irises, and castor-oil plants.

We left Abadeh the following morning in the

carriage. It was a roomy, heavy conveyance, with very strong springs, rendered additionally so by being all bound round with rope. It had the arms of Persia—a lion, and the sun looking over its back—emblazoned on its panels. It was drawn by six horses, ridden by three postillions. Some of the horses had their tails stained a magenta colour with madder, which form of decoration is only allowed for the horses of the Shah or his sons. The postillions wore high black astrakan hats, and a livery of dark blue cloth, with green facings and white braid. Their coats from the waist downwards were made remarkably full. They had high jack boots, and carried whips with short wooden handles about a foot long, and having exceedingly long lashes. On coming to a difficult piece of the road, or on going up an incline, they used these whips with great effect, swinging them from side to side, first across the led horses' backs, then over their shoulders on to the back of the horse they were riding. It was very exciting going along with six horses like this, all at full gallop, and the postillions slashing away with their whips. A crowd of some 200 villagers assembled to witness our departure, and all along the road, here and there, were collected



the blind, and those suffering from affections of the eyes, hoping for a cure.

It was heartrending to see them running after the carriage, calling out that if I only looked at them they would get well. The horse-soldiers, some of whom had gone on in front with the Satib, and some of whom rode with us, were much better clothed and accoutred than those we had seen at Bushire, or on the march south of Shiraz. They had white sheepskin hats and grey uniforms, trimmed with red and yellow. Each had a breech-loading rifle slung over his back, a cartridge belt round his waist, and a short sword by his side.

At Shulgestan we stayed again in a "chapar-khaneh." From there to Yezdikhast was along a continuation of the dusty plain we had been traversing so many days. Yezdikhast is one of the most peculiarly situated villages that can possibly be imagined. In what is probably the dried-up bed of a big river stands a large isolated mass of irregular rock, which must at one time have formed an island in the stream. The summit of the rock is about on a level with the plain around, and on it the village stands. Nothing of the deep ravine can be seen until

you reach its banks, and until you get quite close to Yezdikhast you do not notice that it is anything more than an ordinary group of houses situated on the surface of the plain, as it is only them that show above the surface of the ravine.

We descended by a steep, irregular road into the ravine, down which there was considerable difficulty in conveying the carriage. We then came to a caravanseri, well built of stone, with the most gigantic steep steps leading to the upper apartments. At the bottom of the ravine ran a small stream of water, which we crossed by a bridge, and arrived at the "chapar-khaneh" on the north side of it, where we stopped. A short distance from the "chapar-khaneh" rises the immense rock on which the houses composing Yezdikhast are perched. The sides of the rock are very steep, and access can only be obtained to the village by crossing a drawbridge at its western extremity. When the drawbridge is raised the inhabitants are secure from invasion, unless artillery be brought to bear on them.

An amusing story was told me with regard to this place and the refusal of its inhabitants to pay the taxes which were due from them. A party of soldiers, with their officers, were sent

to force the payment. When they arrived they found the drawbridge raised, and no means of gaining access to the village. They managed, however, to catch some of its inhabitants who had not had time to take refuge in the stronghold. These they threatened to shoot, unless the money due was forthcoming the following morning. The soldiers then partook themselves with their prisoners to the caravanseri, and the officers to the "chapar-khaneh," which, as I have already mentioned, are situated some distance apart, separated by a stream. In the night the villagers let down the bridge, sallied forth, seized the officers, and returned with them to their rock. "Now," they said, "return us our men, or we throw your officers down from our precipice!" Ultimately an exchange of prisoners was effected, and the soldiers had to depart, leaving the inhabitants of Yezdikhast triumphant.

In the afternoon we visited the village, passing round the north side of the rock, where apparently the main drain empties itself, for the stench was something abominable. We crossed the drawbridge, and went down the dark, narrow central street. Houses are built into the rock at all sorts of peculiar angles—arching over the road, along

its sides, and beneath its level. At the south-eastern extremity we came to an open space at the edge of the rock, where it slanted vertically downwards to the depths beneath. This is the place of execution, from which many an unfortunate offender has been hurled down. Our guide was about to take us into the mosque; but as this caused some excitement amongst the onlookers, who had collected to gaze at us, and as I did not wish to offend their religious susceptibilities, we passed on, and called on the Satib, who was staying with the *ked-khoda*, or head man of the village. Chairs were produced for us, while our hosts sat on their heels. We were then served with little cups of exceedingly sweet coffee, flavoured with rose water. The room we were in overhung the side of the rock, and from it an extensive view could be obtained of the surrounding country. We returned along the south side of the rock, in which there are several caves, used as stables.

Four hours' drive the following morning took us from Yezdikhast to Mak-sud-Beggi. In the carriage we got along at a greater pace, but did not travel more than one stage in the course of the day, and consequently had a long time to get

through after the day's journey was over. The caravan came along much slower than the carriage, so that we were landed about midday in a bare room, with nothing but a rug to sit on. If we showed ourselves outside, we were immediately mobbed by people wanting us to look at their eyes, my wife as well as myself. Our room at Mak-sud-Beggi was a new one, in a house which was in the process of being built, and we were able to watch the men engaged in their work. Some were constructing an archway with mud bricks, chanting all the time in a sing-song way a passage from the Koran; others were engaged in decorating the walls which looked on to the court-yard, their surface having been smeared in a uniform way with moist mud, then had a raised pattern of a geometrical design worked up on them in fine white plaster. The contrast of the white design against the brown was most pleasing, and effectively broke up the monotony of the plain wall.

In the evening we managed to escape from the villagers, and got a walk among the vineyards and fields which surround the town; but it was a regular scramble, jumping irrigation channels, and climbing through holes in walls.

The mud walls which surround the vineyards and gardens never have the doorways which pierce them made at all in proportion to the height of the individuals for whose use they are constructed. We had to bend double sometimes to get through.

The two officers and the Mulla came to return my call of the previous day at Yezdikhast. They were much surprised at the size of the breakfast cups, which were the only ones I had to offer them for tea. They, however, put in an immense amount of sugar, and drank the unusually large potion. To entertain them I showed them the illustrations in Curzon's "Book of Persia," which I had with me. The map they did not seem to make anything of, but with the portraits of various personages they were much pleased. On their leaving I shook hands with them, at which European custom they were very awkward.

The road we drove along the next day (April 13th) was very uneven; in several places we had to cross the beds of dried-up water-courses, going up and down banks of almost perpendicular steepness, where I should never have imagined it possible that a carriage could have been successfully steered.

Kumishah was the name of the place for which we were bound. It had at one time been a fairly large town, but its population was much reduced by the famine in 1871, and a large number of its houses were in ruins. We entered the town through a large gateway, where an immense concourse of people had gathered to stare at us. Many of them ran for some distance along by the side of the carriage, and when we got out to walk up to the telegraph station a way had to be cleared for us amongst them by the horse soldiers.

The telegraph station, which was very large and commodious, like so many of the others at the time of our visit, was untenanted. The following day was exceedingly windy, and we were thankful to be in the carriage, and not riding. Great columns of dust whirled about, filling eyes and mouth. In places it looked as if the plain was on fire, and clouds of smoke were arising from it. In the upper room, at the "chapar-khaneh" at Mayar, the doors fitted so badly that volumes of dust kept blowing in, covering beds, carpet, food, everything. The wind dropped towards evening, and we had a quiet night, arising very joyful, as we were that day to reach Julfa, our journey's end.

At the "*chapar-khaneh*" at Marg we were met by Mr Stainton, of the Telegraph Department at Julfa, and Mr Seth, an Armenian, the agent for Messrs Sassoons. They had brought with them a sumptuous breakfast and letters from England.

Very beautiful was the first view we had of Ispahan as we descended the hills into the plain in which it lies; and great was our delight and excitement at catching sight of the place to which we had been travelling so long. There it lay, in a wide arid plain, bounded by high hills, with jagged, irregular outline, whose topmost peaks were still white with snow. A wide, swiftly-flowing stream coursed through the plain, on the banks of which the bright fresh green of the gardens mingled with the brown buildings. The blue-domed mosques and the minarets sparkled in the brilliant sunshine, and all was framed by an arch of cloudless heavenly blue.

Our arrival at Julfa, which is an Armenian suburb of Ispahan, where most of the Europeans reside, and where I had selected to stay in preference to being in Ispahan itself, was most imposing. The narrowness of the streets prevented our entering the town in the carriage. We had therefore to mount our horses. This we did soon

after passing "The Farewell Fountain," a spot marked by a solitary tree, to which the friends of a traveller going southwards accompany him before saying the last good-bye.

My wife, with her horse led by the *sise*, who, in his best clothes, was beaming all over at thus returning to his native city, rode by the side of Mr Seth, in his picturesque Eastern costume, mounted on a white donkey, gorgeous with an elaborately embroidered saddle-cloth and trappings. I followed her with the two officers, one on either side of me. Horse-soldiers went before and behind us; our servants, camp-followers, and caravan brought up the rear. In this way we wound down many narrow lanes, between high mud walls, at the doors in which the Armenian women and children, in bright red and white costumes, crowded to see us pass. We were conducted to a house, which had been furnished and arranged for us with everything we could possibly want—even tooth-brushes and hair-oil were provided.

Nearly all the houses in Julfa are built on the same plan. No windows face on the road, only the doorways. The doors are massive wooden structures, protected with large wooden bolts.

On passing through them you arrive in a small lobby, which opens on to a courtyard, containing trees and flowers; around this courtyard the rooms are grouped. The officers, Mr Seth and Mr Stainton, accompanied us to our new abode; and after they had smoked the "kalian," partaken of tea and sherbet, left us to explore it. A few hours later the Prince's Prime Minister—Abraham Kuli Khan—came to pay me a visit of welcome, and said that the Prince wished me to take a day's rest after the fatigues of my journey, and to come and visit him the following day, two hours before sunset. He addressed me with all sorts of complimentary and prettily-expressed phrases; and I only trust my poor remarks in return got dressed up by Mr Seth in the process of translation into Persian, otherwise they must have sounded very flat in comparison. Later on, when I got to know a few phrases in Persian, I was surprised to find how a passing salutation of mine was converted into a wish that the saluted individual's shadow might never grow less, or that his nose might be fat.

Just one hour before I started on my first visit to the Prince, my box of instruments, which had gone astray at Aden, arrived safely. It had not



A HOUSE AT JULFA.

been put out at Bushire, as it should have been, but was carried on to Busrah, and then brought back, finally being sent on by specially fast mules.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SHADOW OF THE KING AND HIS SURROUNDINGS.

HAVING described how we got to Ispahan, I will proceed to give a sketch of our life during the two months we stayed there. Full and busy months they were for me. Much of my time was, of course, occupied with the Prince Zille Sultan. He sent for me at all hours of the day, dating, as is the Persian custom, so many hours before sunset or after sunrise. His favourite hour of all for interviews was one hour after sunrise, and as it took me an hour to reach his palace from my house, it necessitated my getting up before 5 A.M. He always sent for me a carriage and four horses, ridden by two postillions, one or more out-riders, some men on foot with long sticks, called *ferashes*, and usually the Satib. The carriage could not come up the narrow streets of Julfa, and to get to it I had to ride to outside the gates.

Three bridges span the Zendeh-Rud, or "River of Life," in the neighbourhood of Ispahan. The Pul-i-Marnnu, the oldest and most westerly, was the one by which I usually crossed—an unpretentious and partly broken-down structure, nothing to compare with the Pul-i-Chehar-Bagh, which connects the Chehar-Bagh, the chief road of Ispahan, with Julfa. This latter is a stone structure, built by Ali Verdi Khan, in the reign of Shah Abbas the Great; it has numerous regularly-sized pointed arches and a paved road running in the centre, on either side of which is a covered pathway opening by numerous arches on to the river and the road. At the corners of the bridge are circular towers containing staircases leading up to the roof of the covered pathway, which can be used as a promenade, and down to a vaulted passage which runs the whole length of the bridge. The other bridge, which lies further to the east, I did not have an opportunity of visiting.

It was very refreshing to get out of the narrow lanes of Julfa, shut in and cramped as they are by the high walls (built by the Christian Armenians to protect themselves from the thieving Mohammedans) on to the Pul-i-Marnnu, from which wide and distant views can be obtained both up and

down the river. The state of the Zendeh-Rud changed greatly during our stay. At first, due to the melting snow on the Bakhtiari Mountains, it was a wide, swiftly-flowing stream of thick, yellow muddy water; so swollen was it that, on returning from Ispahan to Julfa by the Pul-i-Chehar-Bagh, I had to wade through it for some distance on horseback. Later on, before we left, it had dwindled down to a few narrow streams of clear running water, with long stretches of stony beach between them. Looking down on it from the bridge, a gay and brilliant sight was often to be seen, due to the bright and variously-coloured cotton fabrics, recently dyed, and spread out to dry in the sunshine on its banks.

To be driven as I was from the Zendeh-Rud to Ispahan was not altogether a pleasant procedure, on account of the condition of the roads. They had, in all probability, like most of the buildings in Ispahan, been made at the time of Shah Abbas, and left to themselves ever since. Hardly any one drives in Ispahan, and I can quite understand there is not the least temptation to do so. It was, however, very interesting, and sometimes very exciting, driving through this thoroughly Oriental city. Crowds used to collect,

and struggle to catch a glimpse of the *Feranghi hákim*. Every now and then our progress would be impeded by some obstinate mule, or mules, who stubbornly refused to get out of the way; then the out-riders and *ferashes* would commence with their sticks to belabour the unfortunate beasts, and sometimes, to hasten matters, their riders and drivers also.

Some pious individuals, seeing the Prince's carriage, and imagining he was in it, would make a most profound bow, bending themselves almost double at the hips, afterwards being greatly disgusted to find that they had made such a marked obeisance to a dog of a Christian!

I alighted from the carriage generally at the gate of the Chehl Situn garden, or "Garden of the Forty-pillar Palace." This garden has been laid out and arranged to suit the Prince's own particular fancy. It is very pretty, and in it I spent many a pleasant hour. Its great defect is the absence of shade, owing to the plane-trees—which are large and very numerous—having had their lower branches lopped off, and only clumps left at the top. It has numerous flowers, and during May was a mass of roses of various species, the perfume of which, as a Persian would say, "intoxi-

cated the senses, and made the heart drunk." The Prince spends a great deal of his time while he is in Ispahan in this garden. He has several little houses, with glass sides to them, located in different parts, and in them he holds the numerous interviews which his official position as Governor necessitates. The object of the glass sides to the houses is that no eavesdropper may approach too near, and the malicious add, "so as to overhear the lies which are being uttered within." During most afternoons an excellent band with European instruments, trained by a French bandmaster, plays in this garden European and Persian music. The beauty of the latter is not at all evident to the ear of a European.

In the centre of the garden stands the Chehl Situn palace, in front of which is a large imposing stone platform, with an ornamental roof, supported by twenty wooden pillars. It is probable that at one time a similar platform was situated on the opposite side of the building, also with twenty pillars, and hence the name "Chehl Situn," or "Forty-pillar Palace." The pillars were formerly decorated with numerous small pieces of mirror, which have now been removed, and a dull red paint substituted for them. An idea as to what



CHEHL SITUN PALACE, ISPAHAN.

the original style of decoration was with the mirrors can still be obtained from a part at the back of the platform which has been left untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the renovator.

In its original state, with the sun shining on it, this platform and its columns must have been ablaze with sparkling light and brilliant colouring. In the building behind the platform is a great hall, around which are hung some large pictures illustrating historical events which occurred during the reigns of the Sefavi kings, when Ispahan was at the very summit of its glory, and when it is said to have extended twenty-four miles in circumference, and to have contained a population of 100,000 (Chardin). The colouring of the pictures is very bright, and excellently preserved. There is a marked absence of perspective, but the detail is highly worked up, and the expression of the faces well rendered. In one is shown a great battle between the Persians and the Ottoman Turks. The Persians are led by Shah Ismail, the founder of the Sefavi dynasty, who re-established Persia as a kingdom eight centuries after it had been crushed by the Arab invasion.

He was a lineal descendant of the seventh of the twelve holy Imams, and all his ancestors had

been noted for their piety. His accession to power established the Sheah sect of Mohammedanism as the national religion, which it has remained ever since, and between which and the Suni sect, to which the Turks adhere, there has always been rivalry and bitterness. The battle depicted in this picture is one of the outcomes of this feud.

The pure philosophic, unadulterated deism of the Prophet had not sufficient romance in it to please the poetry-loving Persians; the self-sacrificing life and tragic death of Ali, who married Mahomet's favourite daughter, Fatima, and who, after his wife, was the prophet's first convert, together with the still more tragic death of Ali's two sons, Hossein and Hassan, supplied the necessary picturesque element.

The Sheah sect of Mohammedans look upon Ali as Mahomet's immediate lawful successor, and regard him almost with equal reverence. Abu-Bekr, Omar, and Othman, who held the Caliphat after Mahomet, before Ali, and who are recognised by the Sunis, the Sheahs regard as usurpers.

The Turks in this battle were under the command of Sultan Selim I., called "The

Grim," from the delight he took in the murder of his relations and grand viziers, a taste which he combined with a love for art and literature—he himself writing poems of considerable excellence. The struggle depicted resulted in a victory for the Turks, who outnumbered the Persians. They however gained little by it, being obliged soon after to retire for want of supplies. The Persians state that Selim linked his cannon—which are shown at the back of the picture—together with chains, and prevented the charge of their cavalry. Shah Ismail is reported to have cut asunder with his sabre the large chain which joined them. In the picture he is represented cleaving in two the head of an unfortunate Turk from behind, an immense gush of blood proceeding from the wound. In another picture the same valorous monarch is shown, fighting against the Uzbeg Tartars of Khorossan.

Shah Ismail was succeeded by his son Shah Tamasp, who in a third picture is seen entertaining at a banquet the fugitive emperor of India, Hoomayoon—an event which, from the sumptuous way it was carried out, formed one of the most notable events of his reign. To this monarch Queen Elizabeth sent Mr Anthony

Jenkinson for the purpose of entering into a treaty of commerce. The king, on hearing he was a Christian, replied that he did not want the aid of infidels, and sent a man with sand to sprinkle on the foot-path he had trod and was supposed to have defiled.[1]

There are two other pictures representing scenes of conviviality. In one Shah Abbas the Great is entertaining Abdul Mohammed Khan, the chief of the Uzbegs, and in the other Abbas II. is extending his hospitality to Kalif Sultan, Ambassador of the Great Mogul.

In all three of the banqueting scenes dancing-girls and musicians are performing. The dancing-girls have castanets and tambourines, instruments resembling banjos, zittas, flageolets, and violoncellos are also depicted. In all the wine is flowing freely, especially in that showing Shah Abbas the Great, in which one of the guests has fallen back inebriated. The teaching of the Prophet against the use of intoxicating liquors was evidently not strictly followed by these descendants of his.

The third battle scene belongs to a later period. In it Nadir Shah is in combat with the Indians, whose elephants are shown.

[1] Sir J. Malcolm's "History of Persia."



PERSIAN PAINTING IN THE CHEHL SITUN PALACE (SHAH ABBAS THE GREAT ENTERTAINING ABDUL MOHAMMED KHAN).

Nadir Shah may be described as the Napoleon of the East. He was a brigand who took up arms to assist Tahmasp II. to regain his throne, and turn out the invading Afghans. He possessed great military talents, and was not only successful in freeing the country of its unpleasant visitors, but gained several victories over the Ottoman Turks, and extended the boundaries of Persia in all directions. Ultimately he usurped the crown he had originally rescued for its rightful owner, and turned the tables on the Afghans by capturing Cabul. He then marched southwards to India and engaged in the battle represented. Delhi surrendered to him, and the wealth of the Mogul emperors became his spoil. This he conveyed to Persia. The only other picture is a portrait of the present sovereign, which hangs over the doorway.

On leaving the Chehl Situn garden for the Prince's palace, I passed through a gateway, the summit of the pillars on each side of which, as of all those in the neighbourhood of the palace, are decorated with horns of animals shot by the Prince himself. Sentries in grey and red uniforms of European cut guard all the gateways; but these soldiers take matters very easily, only

picking up their guns when they see any one approaching they have to salute; at other times they sit and lounge about as they please.

After passing through several narrow passages and crowds of attendants, I arrived at a prettily-laid-out courtyard, the wall running along one side of which is completely covered by the horns of animals which have fallen to the Prince's gun, mostly of ibex and mountain sheep. On another side of this courtyard is the wall of the Prince's anderum, only pierced by two curtained doorways. On a third side is a part of the palace used as a school for the Prince's children, and on the fourth a long gallery, out of which lead several rooms, which are those mostly used by the Prince for his audiences. Before arriving at the gallery, I had to ascend a flight of steps and pass through an ante-room. Outside the door of the ante-room there was generally a large collection of shoes of all shapes and sizes, and in it a collection of soldiers, priests, and others waiting for interviews with the Prince Governor.

The gallery looks out through several large archways on to the courtyard, and is lined with shrubs and flowers, while on its walls hang several coloured portraits of the Prince himself.

The rooms leading out of it have rugs on the floor of the finest quality—most exquisite design and colouring, while the ornaments contained in them are of the commonest European glass-work, such as chandeliers with prismatic pendants, or the representation of a hand holding a vase.

His Royal Highness, the Prince Zille Sultan, or "Shadow of the King," is not the first of his race who has been so named. The title was formerly bestowed on one of the sons of Faith Ali Shah, on account of the extraordinary likeness he is said to have borne to his father. The present holder of it is the eldest son of Shah Nasr-ed-din, and though he bears some resemblance to his father, it did not strike me as being very marked.

Though the eldest son of the reigning Shah, he is not the son of one of his four legal wives, or of a lady of royal blood, and is therefore not regarded as heir to the throne.

He is about forty-five years of age, and since his earliest youth has been the governor of one or more provinces, and had the power of passing a death sentence on those over whom he has ruled.

In his administration he showed so much firm-

ness and ability that the Shah gradually placed more and more of his dominions under his control, until at one time he ruled over nearly half Persia.

He has always been a lover of field sports, and a keen shot. A few days after my arrival he sent me a present of an antelope which he had himself killed on the mountains south of Ispahan.

He took great interest in improving the condition of the troops under him, sending his officers to Austria to be trained in the latest military manœuvres, so that his soldiers became the best drilled and best equipped in the country.

The saying that "Nothing succeeds like success" is one which does not hold good in Persia. There, nothing is so likely to lead to disaster.

The highest post in the kingdom which a subject can hold is that of Sedr Azem, or Grand Vizier, and, instead of being sought after, it is regarded with dread by those who become by force of circumstances compelled to take it. The present holder of the post resisted his appointment as long as he was able, and well he might, for many of his predecessors have met with mysterious deaths. A wealthy man in Persia conceals the extent of his property as much as

possible, for fear that he may be lightened of his possessions. A common way in which this is effected is by the Shah coming to call on him, when not only has he to entertain His Majesty and his followers in the most sumptuous fashion, but he has to beg his acceptance of a present of the current coin of the realm, of such an amount as to make it worth being received by so great a monarch.

The Prince Zille Sultan was gradually becoming too successful; he was becoming too great a power in the land; so that in 1888, when Fortune seemed to be lavishing her sweetest smiles upon him, and when it was generally thought as more than probable that he would succeed his father, he was summoned to Teheran, and suddenly stripped of all his greatness, except the Governorship of Ispahan. Well might he then have exclaimed, like Cardinal Wolsey:—

"Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness.
This is the state of man: To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him:
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is ripening—nips his root,
And then he falls as I do. I have ventured,

Like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
These many summers in a sea of glory;
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me: and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream that must for ever hide me."

Since his fall in 1888 his powers have again been increased, but no one regards him now as the formidable rival to his brother's claims that he once was. Most European writers and others accuse him of some very cruel actions. I am indebted to him for so much kindness that I do not wish to dwell on these unpleasant matters.

It cannot be too well remembered that the standard of cruelty differs amongst different races of mankind, and that many excuses can be made for the actions of a ruler where the country over which he rules, and in which he has been brought up, the standard is low. Englishmen do not attempt to govern India as they do their own country, and the punishments they inflicted on the native population after the Indian Mutiny were typically Eastern in their severity. To a people like the Persians, who are so willing to resign themselves to fate, and who are so in-

different to time, a prolonged imprisonment would have little if any deterrent effect. To be effectual, punishment must be for them direct and rapid. A people who believe that their God will punish the wrongdoers with the ghastly tortures described in the Koran do not expect to be let off in this world by their earthly governors without some torments.

My conversations with the Prince were all conducted through Dr Hussein Khan, for French is the only European language of which he has any knowledge, and of that he can only speak a few phrases.

Dr Hussein Khan is a most cultured man, who, having acquired the scientific spirit and accuracy of the West, happily combines with it the suavity and repose of manners of the East. His father was the Persian Ambassador at Paris, where he himself for a long time resided and graduated as a Doctor of Medicine; he also for some time lived in England, was a student at St Mary's Hospital, and took the diploma of Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. He speaks English and French with great fluency. I have seen him take up an English newspaper he had never seen before, and read it off without the slightest hesita-

tion to the Prince in Persian. The Prince is most fortunate in having a man of such strict integrity, so skilled a physician, and so talented a linguist, in constant attendance upon him.

Some one described him to me as the one Persian who knew everything, but who did nothing, meaning that his constant attendance on the Prince incapacitated him for carrying on any regular practice.

I was very pleased to be able to relieve the Prince's fears with regard to his eyesight, and to assure him that there was not the least sign of the serious disease of the eyes which it had been suggested he was suffering from.

When Dr Galezowski of Paris arrived some six weeks later, we together issued a bulletin to allay the anxiety naturally caused by the alarming rumours which, to the Prince's great annoyance, had become so widely circulated. We stated that we found no organic disease in his eyes, and we considered the symptoms from which he was suffering were due to the state of his general health.

The Persians wrap up what they say with so many complimentary phrases, and intermix their remarks with so many flattering speeches, that it

often becomes difficult to arrive at what they really think and mean. I may say, however, that I believe the Prince was well satisfied with all I did for him. He obtained for me from the Shah the Foreign Order of the Lion and the Sun (Third Class), and gave both my wife and myself very valuable presents on leaving.

The Prince is always most condescending and friendly in receiving European travellers who pass through Ispahan. He watches with interest the various political changes occurring in Western nations; he takes in several European papers, and is well posted up in the events of the day. The *Daily News* and *Punch* are the English papers he has sent to him. The cartoons of Sir John Tenniel and of Lindley Sambourne in the latter he likes to have explained. While I was in Ispahan the papers were full of Lord Rosebery, who had just been appointed Prime Minister: the Prince was somewhat surprised at his clean-shaven face. No one in Persia shaves the upper lip: a clean-shaven face in such a country suggests the appearance of a eunuch. On one occasion he asked me to explain to him a figure of Lindley Sambourne's, representing the New Woman—a lady holding up a latch-key

in one hand, with volumes by advanced writers scattered around her. It seemed strange attempting to explain woman's rights to one who owned so many wives.

On another occasion the Prince requested me to visit him one hour after sunrise the next day, and when I arrived he told me that when he sent for me it was usually a matter of importance, but that that morning it was not so—it was nothing at all—he merely wanted me to examine the eyes of some of his wives! He, however, went on to hint to me that, though he spoke thus airily of them, they really wielded considerable power.

On going to the anderun I found them sitting on cushions round two sides of a room, the head one furthest from the door, each enveloped in a silk shawl of a very flowery pattern, which they drew aside to enable me to examine one eye at a time. My conversation with them was conducted through Dr Hussein Khan and the head eunuch, the latter a big fat man, with a flabby face, devoid of any hair. The ladies first mentioned their complaints in a low whisper to him, which he repeated to Dr Hussein Khan, who translated what they said to me. The Prince's

little daughter, a charmingly pretty almond-eyed girl of about ten, of whom he is exceedingly fond, ran about with her face uncovered, with her short skirts sticking straight out. She looked just like a little fairy.

At the termination of my first interview with the Prince, he courteously explained to me that it was not customary to mention ladies in Persia, and that he had not therefore enquired after my wife, but hoped that she was quite well, and gave me some hyacinths, which he asked me to give to her from him. He sent her on several occasions large plates of strawberries, a fruit which I was told only the royal family are permitted to grow. These strawberries were peculiar in being quite ripe when white in colour, never getting more than a faint tinge of red in them. The mulberries also are ripe when white, looking then very like caterpillars, and not at all inviting; the Persians, however, eat large quantities of them.

The great lady of Ispahan is the Princess Banoe-Ozmeh, the Prince Zille Sultan's sister, who is a widow, and has several grown-up sons. She resides in a part of the palace adjoining the Çhehl Situn garden, which has prettily-laid-out grounds of its own. Soon after our arrival at

Julfa, she sent us each a note, written in bright blue ink, on pale pink paper, welcoming us to Ispahan; enquiring after our health, and hoping the air and water would agree with us; she also asked my wife to write to her sometimes. My wife on three occasions visited her — twice in her palace at Ispahan, and once at her country residence, a little distance out of Julfa.

The following is a description she wrote of her first visit: "The Princess sent her carriage for me, and with one of the mission ladies to act as interpreter, I went, and was much disappointed to find the entire company had adopted European style of costume. I was taken into a room, and was almost dazzled by the brilliancy of the ladies, the flowers, and the decorations, which were heightened by the bright sunlight coming in through the windows. The room was hung round with gaudy-coloured portraits, mirrors, and pictures: chairs and sofas were covered in bright blue velvet; a large table was heaped up with glass, china, flowers, and fruit. The Princess wore a cream satin dress (princess shape), with large purple roses brocaded; magnificent pearls and diamonds round her neck; a gold-spotted



A PERSIAN LADY'S INDOOR COSTUME.

muslin veil tied over her head, which, falling down behind the hair, lay in long plaits; white silk gloves, over which she had her rings. A common pair of linen cuffs round her wrists completed her quaint costume. She is exceedingly short and stout, and, being completely innocent of anything like a corset, the effect was not pretty. She had her four daughters-in-law with her, who sat in a row on high chairs against the wall, looking extremely uncomfortable. They were dressed in the same style, and had sleepy, stupid faces.

"The Princess is rather a handsome-looking woman, exceedingly proud and haughty in appearance, and, like all other Persian women, was painted and rouged to any extent, especially her eyes, which were dark and lustrous."

On her third visit the Princess wore the usual indoor dress of a Persian lady, which consists of a very short skirt, not extending so far down as the knee, and made very full and stiff, so as to stand almost straight out like that of a ballet girl. The legs below the skirt are sometimes left bare, except for a small sock extending half-way up the calf; at other times a tightly-fitting linen garment is worn over them. The rest of the costume con-

sists of a small cut-away jacket, leaving exposed in front a white vest, sometimes so thin that through it the skin can be seen. A white veil generally envelops the back of the head and neck, which is fastened under the chin.

CHAPTER VIII.

SCIENCE, ART, AND SUPERSTITION.

It soon became known that an eye doctor had arrived in Julfa from Europe, and my house was, before long invaded by patients of all classes suffering from eye disease. They came—some led, others groping their way with a stick. The narrow roadway outside the entrance to my house was daily blocked by their mules, donkeys, and horses. The enclosure inside was occupied by rows of people before I was up in the morning, who would sit and wait with a stolid persistence which no delay seemed to tire.

Dr Aganoor, an Armenian, who had graduated in medicine at Edinburgh, was then in charge of the dispensary attached to the English Mission Station. He kindly put several rooms in it at my disposal. There I went daily and operated. I soon filled all the beds which the rooms contained with cataract patients, and then had to put others

on the floor, which they seemed to prefer, it being more natural for them to lie there.

The dispensary is so constructed that several rooms lead out of one another, and there are three separate staircases leading down from them. These were frequently very convenient in enabling me to make my escape; for while a mob of patients, whom it was impossible for me to see, were besieging one staircase, I was able to get away down another.

The contrast between the orderly way in which operations are carried on in a London hospital and the way I was forced to carry on things at Julfa, was very striking. Try all I could, I was never able to succeed in keeping a number of onlookers away. If I placed custodians at the doors, as soon as I was occupied elsewhere they neglected their trust, and allowed people, one after another, to filter in until the room became filled.

A dervish, tall, and of a wild appearance, partly due to unkempt hair and partly to opium and hashish, one day made a great show of keeping the door for me. I afterwards discovered he had been charging those whom he had admitted a few shies each. This same ingenious rogue on another occasion possessed himself of a cataract

I had recently extracted, and marched it all round the town, obtaining money from the curious for showing them what I had removed from the eye. Another trick that was played on me was by a *seyd*, one of the descendants of the Prophet. He was the door-keeper at a mosque, and had an obstinate affection of the eyes, for which I gave him a lotion. I was surprised at the quantity he got through, and the frequency with which he came with a smiling face, and a bunch of roses, to ask for more. I was told that it was a very righteous act to do anything for one of the descendants of the Prophet, and that it was wise to conciliate the feelings of the people by treating them well, so I went on supplying him; but heard before I left that he had sold my lotion to those attending the mosque, to which he was attached; and I have no doubt he made a good thing by it.

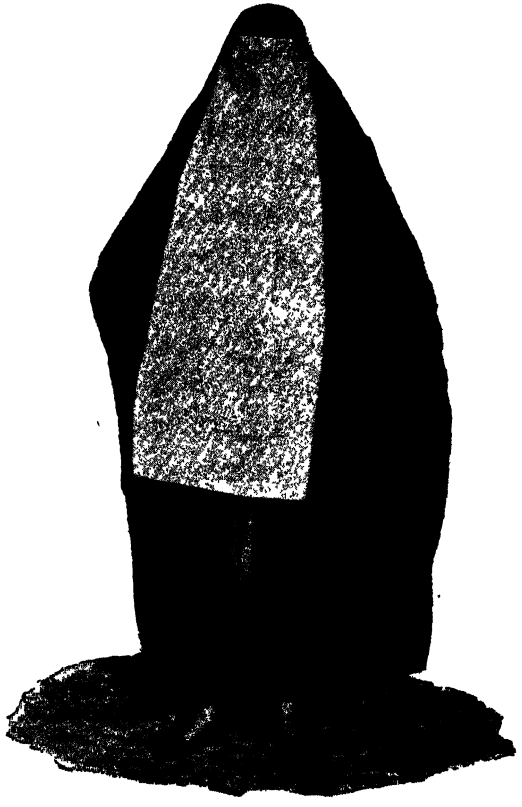
The *seyds*, or rather those who profess to be such, are very numerous. They wear for distinction a dark blue turban, and a bright green scarf round the waist. On account of their descent these persons are regarded, to a certain extent, as sacred, and to do any bodily injury to any of them is a sacrilege.

It can therefore be easily understood that many who are not entitled to it assume the garb for the protection which it affords. I operated on several of them, and have no hesitation in saying that the *seyds* of Ispahan are, as a rule, the most sour-minded, hypocritical, ungrateful individuals that can be met with anywhere.

It was impossible for me to see and to treat everybody who came. All classes took my medicines and drugs as though I had nothing to do but sit and distribute them. The custom of the missionaries, who give medical aid in order to ingratiate themselves and promote their cause, has doubtless accustomed the people to look upon all Europeans as privileged in ministering to their bodily ailments. It was all very interesting; but as the heat during the day increased, it became very exhausting, and seemed unceasing from morning till night. At last I had to request some protection from the Prince, who at once kindly sent me two soldiers to guard the door of my house, and two *ferashes*, with long sticks, to walk with me in the streets and keep the crowd away.

Many Mohammedan ladies of high degree came to consult me *incognito*. They did not

wish it known that they had sought the advice of a *Feranghi* doctor. A woman's outdoor garb,



A PERSIAN LADY'S OUTDOOR COSTUME.

as worn in the towns, is a most effectual disguise. In it a husband cannot even recognise his own wife. They wear large baggy trousers, each leg

of which terminates in a sock for the foot. These garments, among the better class, are generally made of green silk. A dark blue cloak or "chardar" envelops the head and body, made either of silk or cotton, and a long white linen veil completely covers the face, with only a small worked grating in it, measuring four inches by one and a half, opposite the eyes, to see through. They, like the men, on their arrival had all to be first served with the *kalian*, or water-pipe, before the examination of their eyes could be proceeded with.

A visit to a European's house was, to many of them, evidently a very novel proceeding. They generally requested that they might be permitted to see my wife, the *Khanum*, or head of the harem. It was a source of surprise to them to discover that a *Hakim bashi* like myself should only have one wife, and when tea was brought their astonishment was intensified by my getting up to hand it, while my wife remained seated. That a husband should wait on his wife seemed to them most extraordinary. My wife's clothes excited their interest, and they would, I believe, have liked to have made a complete examination of them.

At first, whether I saw women in my house or in their own homes, they did not uncover more than one eye for me to examine at a time. If, however, I found it necessary to examine both at once, they would expose their whole face, generally, however, preferring to keep their chardars held in front of their mouths. I always endeavoured to respect their scruples in these matters as much as possible.

The Persian women paint their faces extensively. It is considered a point of great beauty for the eyebrows to meet over the root of the nose, and should nature not have effected this, art is called in to remedy the defect, and they are made to unite by a broad line of paint. Kohl, or black antimony, they use largely for darkening their eyelashes. The following is a Persian ideal of woman's beauty, taken from Atkinson's translation of "Firdausi Shah Nameh":—

"A moon-faced beauty rose upon his sight,
Like the sun sparkling, full of bloom and fragrance;
Her eyebrows bended like the archer's bow;
Her ringlets fateful as the warrior's kamund;
And graceful as the lofty cypress tree."

This is his description of Rudabeh, the wife of Zal, and the mother of Rustam:—

"Her name Rudabeh; screened from public view
Her countenance is brilliant as the sun;
From head to foot her lovely form is fair
As polished ivory. Like the spring, her cheek
Presents a radiant bloom,—in stature, tall,



A LADY PATIENT.

And o'er her silvery brightness flow
Dark musky ringlets clustering to her feet.
She blushes like the pomegranate flower;
Her eyes are soft and sweet as the narcissus,
Her lashes from the raven's jetty plume

Have stolen their blackness, and her brows are bent
Like archer's bow. Ask ye to see the moon?
Look at her face. Seek ye for musky fragrance?
She is all sweetness. Her long fingers seem
Pencils of silver, and so beautiful
Her presence, that she breathes of Heaven and love."

During my stay in Julfa I frequently met the native doctors; they seemed very anxious to watch my practice, and came frequently to the dispensary to see me operate. I always found them most agreeable and friendly. A few of them had acquired a smattering of Western science and methods at the Medical College in Teheran. As, however, the dissection of the human body is regarded with much the same holy horror by the Mohammedans to-day as it was by Christians in the time of Versalius, the training they receive must necessarily be of a very imperfect character. Dr Hussein Khan, who held for some time the appointment of Lecturer on Physiology at the College, described to me the difficulties he had to contend with in trying to make a class understand the functions of the body when they are ignorant of its structure.

The majority acquire their right to the title of *Hakim* from a short apprenticeship to

someone who has been so designated before. Medicine in Persia is much in the condition in which it was in England previous to Sydenham's time. Galen and Avicenna are regarded as the great masters of the art, and their books are the most read. Diseases are divided into hot and cold, and their remedies are similarly classified.

The art of prescribing consists in giving a cold remedy for a hot disease and a hot remedy for a cold one. Bleeding is largely resorted to for all complaints, even for malarial fever. Smallpox is kept endemic by the practice of inoculation, the fore-arm being selected as the seat of the operation. In fact their practice may be most fitly described by the verse in which the famous Dr Lettsom is stated to have summed up his own:—

"When patients come to I,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em;
Then if they choose to die,
What's that to I? I lets 'em."

The old operation of couching for hard cataract, in which the opaque lens is displaced from the axis of vision, but still left in the eye and not removed, as is the custom in Europe at the present day, is the only one resorted to by Persian

surgeons. I saw numerous patients who had been so treated, and a few quite successfully, but a very large number with disastrous results. A favourite method of treating inflammatory affections of the eye is by fumigating them with the smoke from burning asses' dung. A form of counter irritation is resorted to in obstinate cases, small issues being kept constantly open on the outer side of the arm by the insertion into them of grains of Indian wheat. I saw one man who had had issues kept open in this way for twenty years, and though he had patiently submitted to this prolonged course of treatment, he expected me to effect a cure in a few days.

Besides the regular *Hakims*, there are numerous old women who are said to have remedies of such a marvellous character that they will effect a cure when everything else has failed. I saw a specimen of one of these old ladies' handiwork, which was mechanically ingenious, though not very effectual. The patient was suffering from what is an exceedingly common affection out there, namely, a turning in of the margin of the eyelids, so that the eyelashes rubbed against and irritated the eye. The old lady had enclosed a fold of the skin of the lid

between two pieces of wood, each the size of half a lucifer match, which were bound tightly together. Each end of the pieces of wood were then connected by strings to a band passing round the patient's head in front of her ears; in this way the lid was drawn away from the eye, but, needless to say, the patient found the remedy worse than the disease.

Speaking of the patients I used to see at the Dispensary, I may say that the Persians bear pain with considerable fortitude and patience. Most of my operations I was able to perform under the local anæsthetic effect of cocaine, but in some this was not possible. When it was necessary for them to have chloroform, I never found that they made any objection, though I was told that a doctor of the Residency at Bushire got into considerable trouble with some Mohammedans through administering it. They also very willingly consented to have operations performed, except when I found it necessary to suggest the removal of the eye. However unsightly or painful an eye might be, or however much I impressed upon them the grave risk its non-removal was to the sight of the other one, I could never induce them to have it removed.



A BAKHTIARI PEASANT GIRL.

Some, as soon as they realised what I meant, bolted away as fast as they could, and I would never see them any more. The amount of ophthalmia throughout Persia, both in the villages and towns, is something enormous. Some of the worst cases of granular ophthalmia I saw came from the Bakhtiari country, a mountainous district to the west of Ispahan, thus definitely showing that those living in dry and elevated districts are not, as has been stated, unaffected by this malady. The inhabitants of this region are a fine, hardy, courageous race of mountaineers; their origin is very uncertain, for being nomads, and living for the most part in tents, they are a people who leave behind them no abiding records. This region has, however, from time immemorable been peopled by tribes having the same characteristics as those who inhabit it now. They are exceedingly lawless, cherish blood feuds, and are fond of adventurous marauding expeditions.

The Bakhtiari hills lie between the site of the ancient royal city of Susa and the ruins of Persepolis, and the Achæmenian kings had to pay tribute, we are told, to the warlike Uxii inhabiting this district.

Layard has given a charming account of

his life amongst the Bakhtiaris, in his book of early adventures; Mrs Bishop has recently recorded her wanderings in this land; while Mr Curzon in his monumental work on Persia, has collected all that is known concerning them.

Their country possesses, according to their own account, much mineral wealth, and some fine samples of coal have been seen which were brought from it. Their chief is called the Ilkhani, and several members of his family came to me as patients. They were anxious for me to visit their country, and offered me a hospitable reception. Had not the northern route at that time of the year offered greater attractions, I think I should have been tempted to have returned home that way *via* Busrah.

The Persians of all classes are exceedingly superstitious; their country is therefore a happy hunting-ground for quacks, charlatans, and miracle-mongers of all descriptions. At a consultation I was engaged in one day with the Prince's doctors, at which the Prince was present, the arm of the chair in which I was sitting gave way, and I was precipitated on the floor. His Highness at once pronounced this as a bad omen, and advised us to defer our further deliberations until next day.

The gaze of anyone supposed to possess an evil eye on any object animate or inanimate is much feared; charms of various descriptions are worn by men and animals as a protection from it, and to warn off evil spirits. Horses, mules, and donkeys have blue beads hung round their necks for this purpose. On one occasion my wife wanted to have some of these as a remembrance of a horse who had carried her well. The owner, however, would on no account sell them except for a sum almost equivalent to that of the horse itself; he feared that if he removed them something disastrous would be almost sure to happen to the animal. It is a common practice to place one small bead in an animal's tail. Nearly all children wear a charm of some sort. I have a dried sheep's eye, flattened, and strung between two beads, such as they wear in front of their caps. Texts of the Koran, sewn up in little silk bags, are tacked on to the front of their clothes. Little books containing portions of the Koran are enclosed in engraved silver boxes, and worn as armlets. Old coins, or almost anything unusual, may be worn in this way.

Forecasts of coming events are frequently sought for by taking what is called a "Fall in

Hafiz," or the Koran. An open knife is inserted among the leaves of a volume of Hafiz's poems, and some sort of incantation, such as the following, pronounced: "O Hafiz of Shiraz, impart foreknowledge to my anxious heart!" The book is then opened where the knife has been placed, and the passage which first catches the inquirer's eye supplies the prophetic answer. Patients who were in doubt as to whether or not they should come to consult me would go through this little pantomime first, and repeat it after they had seen me, to decide whether they should adopt the treatment I had recommended.

Most pious Mohammedans carry a rosary—the ones which are of greatest value being made of sacred mud from around the tomb of the martyred Hossein at Kerbela. By counting the beads of the rosary they are able to determine their course of action.

Pieces of the same sacred mud, dried, and with a pattern stamped on them, called "Kerbela Stones," are used by the faithful in their prayers.

Mohammed instructed his followers to bow their heads to the ground when praying. In order to keep strictly to the letter of his law, when saying their prayers on a carpet they place

these pieces of mud on it, and press their foreheads against them. In the pattern of most praying-mats some spot in the design indicates the position at which the piece of earth should be placed. These Kerbela Stones, which Mohammedans regard as sacred, they do not like to have defiled by the hands of an unbeliever. I had however some given me; one the shape of the upper part of a Gothic arch, and another ten-sided.

Astrologers are still consulted as to future events, and also to determine a propitious time at which to undertake a journey.

An amusing account is given of the way in which one of their predictions became fulfilled in the time of Shah Abbas. That monarch was informed by them that a serious danger threatened the Sovereign of Persia in the immediate future; he therefore abdicated his throne to an unbeliever, named Yusoofee, who was crowned, and enjoyed all the power and privileges of a king for three days: he was then put to death. The astrologer's prediction being thus verified, Shah Abbas resumed his regal office, with the assurance that now a long course of prosperity lay before him.[1]

[1] Sir J. Malcolm's "History of Persia."

The climate of Ispahan, and indeed of most of the table-land of Iran, is very agreeable. Teheran is hotter than Ispahan; but for the two months or so when the heat is intense, it is always possible for the well-to-do to escape to the hills. If only proper sanitary precautions were taken to avoid the transmission of diseases propagated by water, such as typhoid fever, dysentery, and cholera, and for the isolation of infectious cases, such as smallpox, Persia would be one of the healthiest countries in the world to live in. In Julfa and Ispahan, and probably in most of the other towns, streams of water in dirty ditches, called *jubes*, run through the centre of the streets. They serve for irrigation streams, drains, and wash-tubs, and in warm weather give forth the most pestilential odours. Refuse of all sorts is thrown out in the streets, courtyards, or anywhere in the open; the kindly sun soon dries up any moisture it may contain, and numbers of wretched wild dogs who prowl the streets together with jackals from the desert, act as scavengers at night.

It is remarkable that though in all Persian towns there are numbers of these—the lowest form of the canine species—who are left to forage for

themselves, there is no hydrophobia in the country. I enquired of all the doctors I met, and none of them had seen a case. Dr Wills, however, refers to one in his book entitled "The Land of the Lion and the Sun." Cases of consumption and scrofula are but rarely met with—the tubercle bacillus does not seem to flourish in that clear dry atmosphere—and I saw scarcely any scrofulous affections of the eye, which are so common in London. Rickets too, which is a disease essentially the outgrowth of Western civilization, with its artificial foods for infants, and densely populated towns, is very infrequent. One cannot be long in Julfa without noticing how frequently the pretty rosy-cheeked Armenian children are disfigured by large, flat, unsightly scars, often situated in most conspicuous positions on the face. They are the result of what are called there "Julfa boils." They occur, however, in many towns in the East, and are spoken of as the "Delhi boil," the "Bagdad date-mark," and the "Allepo button." The disease commences as a hard, small, irritable, inflamed swelling, which generally ulcerates. It lasts sometimes for several months, and is very intractable to treatment. It affects new-comers as well as residents, animals

as well as the human species, and is supposed to depend largely upon insanitary conditions, having disappeared to a great extent from Delhi since improvements have been made in its water-supply.

Inspecting and bargaining for the goods which the *dallals*, or pedlars, brought round, was a great amusement to us. They invariably asked at first double or more for an article than its real worth. I suppose by doing so they sometimes catch an unwary or inexperienced traveller; or possibly they may have discovered the satisfaction which an Englishman feels at having made a bargain, and reduced the price of anything, and how much more likely he is to buy under such circumstances. On our offering them about a third of what they asked they would not be the least offended, but at once make an immense reduction in a most amusing way. No purchase seemed to be ever effected without a great amount of wrangling.

Often after considerable discussion, in which neither side was prepared to give way, the article was left with us for some days, and then they would return and re-open negotiations. We should have been frequently taken in over our purchases had we not had the assistance of Mr

and Mrs Elias, who lived close by us, and who kindly took the greatest interest in procuring for us specimens of Persian art of the best sorts. Mrs Elias has lived in Julfa a very long time, and speaks fluently such unusual languages as Armenian, Persian, Turkish, and Hindustani. She has an extensive knowledge of Persian ways and customs, and exquisite tact in managing the different races of individuals amongst whom she resides.

We spent many a pleasant hour in their pretty compound, at that delightful time of the day in the East when, after the fierce heat of the mid-day sun, the shadows are lengthening out and all nature seems to be palpitating once again with life in the freshness of the evening air. There we would sit and discuss the relative merits of old carpets, embroideries, turquoise, etc., Mrs Elias bringing to show us from her own collection various specimens. The Persians are naturally an artistic race, and they apply their talent to the decoration of all the objects of their daily use, rarely producing anything purely and simply for ornamentation. Under the patronage and encouragement of the far-seeing Shah Abbas the Great, the quality of

their work in its various branches reached great excellence; and even under the scant favour which is met with from the Kajar dynasty, and the competition which is now experienced from cheap European manufactured goods, in some lines good artistic material is still being produced. The ceramic art has long flourished in Persia. Fragments of unglazed earthenware vessels of



A GROUP OF EARTHENWARE FROM ISPAHAN.

a reddish clay, with a primitive form of decoration, have been found in the oldest heaps of ruins of the city of Rhages, which existed before the Christian era, and was several times destroyed by earthquakes, being finally overthrown some 600 years ago. Glazed bricks were discovered in the ruins of the palaces at Susa, so that this form of decoration was evidently known in

the times of the Achæmenian kings. A great stimulus to the production of artistic pottery came to Persia from China.

Before the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, Persia was the highroad along which goods from China and India passed to Europe.

In Persia to-day there is a great deal of Chinese porcelain. I saw some of it in many houses in Ispahan and Julfa. Beautiful Chinese dishes were sometimes brought to me to place my instruments in previous to an operation.

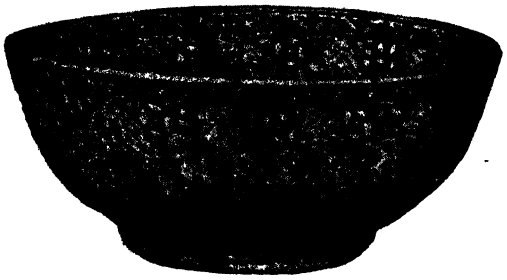
The Persians have so closely imitated their Chinese copies that it is not always easy to tell them apart. I bought some cups and saucers, evidently Chinese in design, but with a Persian mark on the back.

The Persian pottery is not of the same hard clay as the Chinese porcelain, and a fracture of it shows it to be of a more porous structure. Some of the old Persian vessels are very beautiful in shape and design, having a white ground, and floral decorations on them in blue. I had given to me a large sherbet bowl of this style of ware, decorated all over with inscriptions from the Koran. The modern earthenware made in imitation of this is very inferior, both in the

quality of the glaze and in the execution and character of the designs. In nearly all of them the blue colour is found to have run.

But few specimens are now to be obtained of a dark-coloured form of pottery having a metallic lustre, the art of producing which has been completely lost.

Ispahan is justly famous for its metal work. Armour is made of damascened steel, inlaid



A SHERBET BOWL.

with gold. This is now used in the "Tazya," or religious play of the Sheahs. Some of it is always brought round for European customers. A set of armour consists of a helmet, a shield, and a guard for the other arm. The helmets are round, with a central spike. Chain-mail hangs down from the back and sides for the protection of the neck, and in front are two little holes in which feathers are inserted. The

shields are circular, and the working and devices on some of them are most excellent. Iron clubs, with cows' heads at the end, were also brought for our inspection. Weapons of this description were used in very remote times, having originated, it is said, with Feridon, a grandson of Shah Jemsheed, who soon after his birth was sought after by the tyrant Zohak.

For safety he was delivered over to the care of a gardener, and for three months was nourished by a cow of unusual beauty. When in later years he grew up, and attacked the unpopular Zohak, he had the end of his mace shaped like a cow's head, in remembrance of the one who had supported him during the critical period of his infancy. Ever since the emblem of a cow has been held in Persia to be a good omen.

Ewers and basins are also made of damascened steel and inlaid gold, for washing the hands. The ewers are of a most graceful shape, with a long tapering curved spout. The basin is a shallow vessel with a round receptacle attached beneath it, over the top of which a small grating with a handle fits. The first time I had one of these brought to me to wash my hands in, I commenced taking up the grating to look for the water,

not understanding that I was to wash my hands while it was being poured over them from the



EWER AND BASIN.

ewer, and that it was to disappear down the grating

This steel work, and the engraving on brass and silver, are arts which do not seem to have deteriorated. Of course the quality of the work varies very much, but that of the best workmen is excellently sharp and clear. The brass work is infinitely finer than any specimen of Benares work which I have seen in this country. The engraved silver work produced in Ispahan is not repoussé work like that from Shiraz. The designs met with in Shiraz are, as I have said, mostly copied from the sculptures at Persepolis, and on the rock tombs. In Ispahan they are mostly taken from pictures and decorations of Chehl Situn Palace, the dancing girls with their castanets being repeated over and over again.

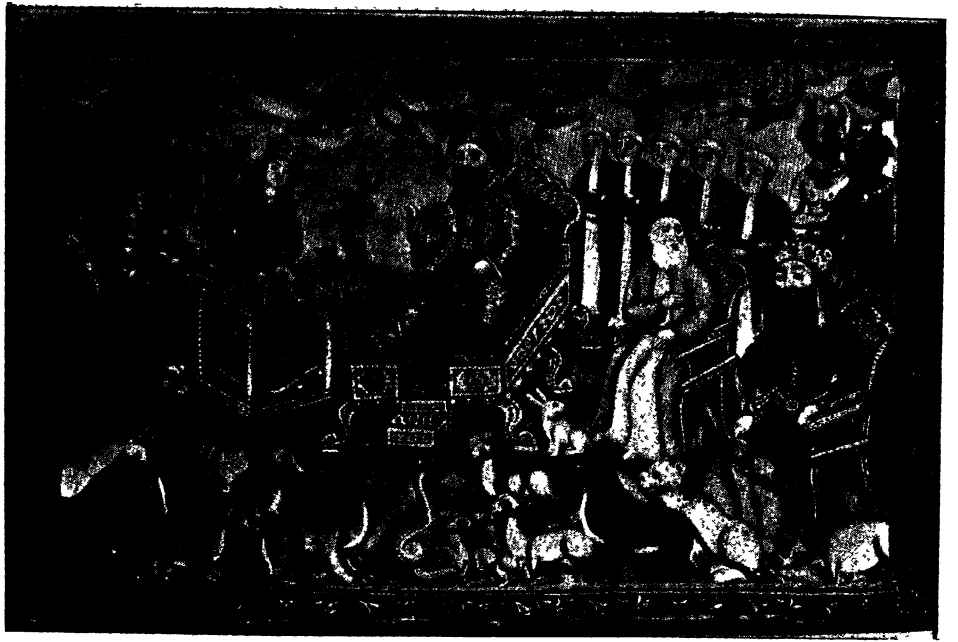
Enamel on copper is another art much practised in Persia. The quality of it varies considerably. Kalian tops are often decorated in this way.

I have some coffee-cups and a dervish's "kashkool" as specimens of the art. They are decorated with portraits of languishing, almond-eyed beauties, floral designs, and Koranic inscriptions.

Papier-maché articles are largely made in Ispahan — book covers, boxes, and pen-cases, called "kalemdans"—all of which are covered

with pictures. In these again the rule is, that the older the article the better is the execution of the painting. Some of the pictures on the papier-maché are very interesting. Those in the Chehl Situn Palace are much copied; others give scenes from the "Life of Rustam," the Persian Hercules, who forms the hero of so much of Firdausi's poetry. Rustam, he tells us, was the son of Zal, or "The Aged," so called because he was an albino, having white hair in his youth.

Zal one day while out hunting came to a tower, in one of the turrets of which he saw, and at once fell in love with, a most beautiful damsel. She likewise became enamoured of him; and to enable him to reach her, she loosed her luxuriant hair, which flowed down from the balcony; and after fastening the upper part to a ring, Zal was able by it to ascend. They were afterwards married by the mutual consent of their parents, and Rustam was their child. So large was he, even before his birth, that an incision had to be made in his mother Rudabeh's side, through which he was removed, the operation being performed under the influence of an intoxicating drug, which made her insensible.



A PERSIAN PAINTING.

All this reads quite like what is now called the operation of Cæsarian Section, performed under the influence of chloroform.

Firdausi goes on to say that Rustam, after his birth, had seven nurses for his support, and that soon nearly as many sheep were required daily to satisfy him.

The most pathetic story is told, and is frequently depicted in Persian paintings, of how Rustam slew in battle his own son. The mother of the child deceived his father into the belief that she had borne him a girl. The young man grew up, inheriting the strength and military prowess of his father, and ultimately became pitted against him in a single combat. After several encounters, the son fell mortally wounded, calling on his father to avenge him. Rustam then, for the first time, learnt the truth of his relationship to his antagonist, and was overcome with grief. As Firdausi prettily says: "The story is one which is full of the waters of the eye."

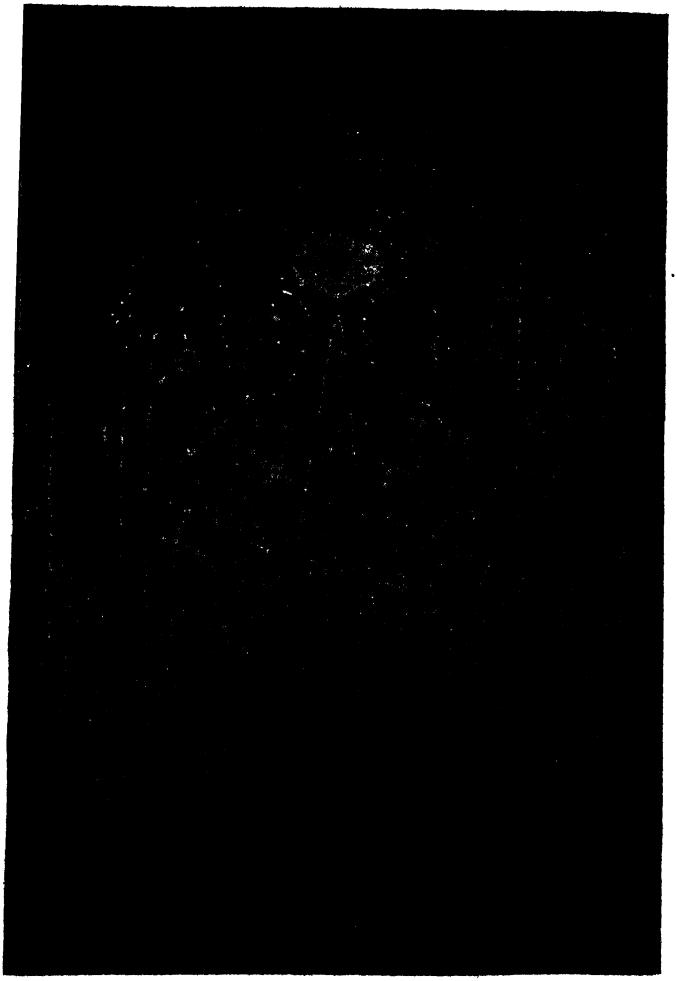
Another story, found in the writings of Firdausi, which is frequently illustrated, is the combat between Isfendiyar and Rustam, in which the latter shoots at Isfendiyar with a forked arrow, hitting him in his two eyes.

"And darkness overspread his sight,
The world to him was hid in night;
The bow dropped from his slackened hand,
And down he sunk upon the sand."

—(ATKINSON'S *translation.*)

The arts, however, for which Persia is most justly famous are her textile fabrics and her embroideries. The former owe much of their value to the extremely soft wool of which they are woven, which is obtained from the sheep of Kerman, Khorassan, and Kurdistan. All of them are still made by hand, in looms, of the simplest construction. The shawls of Kerman and Yezd rival the far-famed ones of Cashmere; in those from the latter town silk is skilfully and effectively introduced.

Carpets have been made in Persia since the earliest times. They were certainly in use at the time of Cyrus, for I have already quoted the passage in which his sarcophagus is described as being covered with some of Babylonian pattern. It is probably from Babylon that the art was introduced. Besides wool, camel and goat's hair are sometimes used for them. Silk carpets, which have a pile something like velvet, are great rarities. Small pieces, often much worn, are



EMBROIDERED PORTIERE.

of Persian carpets, until the introduction of aniline dyes, were all extracted from vegetable matter; the favourite ones being indigo, madder, an orange yellow, a dark green, and an exquisitely brilliant turquoise blue, which latter forms a most pleasing contrast when associated with the natural brown of the camel's hair. The beauty of these colours is, that instead of fading and spoiling with age, they become mellowed and improved, and hence the value of the carpet is enhanced. Carpets in Persia are not used so much as floor-cloths to be walked on, as rugs for sitting or lying upon. No Persian would think of treading on a carpet without having first removed his shoes.

The importation of aniline colours, whose insidious brightness was tending to seriously damage the trade, has been prohibited; but it is still advisable for an intending purchaser to apply a wet cloth to test the fastness of the colours before concluding his bargain.

Various tests for ascertaining the quality of a carpet have been described. One is to drop on it a piece of red-hot charcoal; then, if the carpet is a good one, the singed part can be brushed off without leaving any trace of the burn. Chardin says: "The Persian rule to know good carpets,

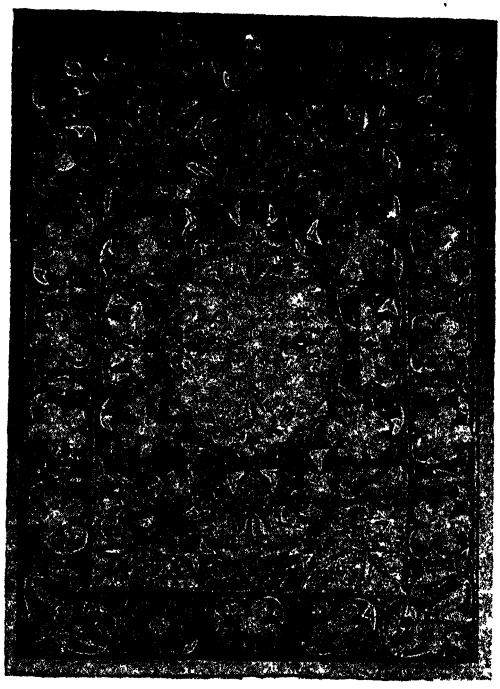
and to rate them by, is to lay their thumb on the edge of the carpet, and to tell the threads in a thumb's breadth; for the more there are the dearer the work is. The most threads there are in an inch-breadth is fourteen or fifteen."

At Sultanabad Messrs Zeiglers & Co., of Manchester, have established an agency, where natives are employed in the production of carpets, of the shape and patterns which are best adapted to suit the English taste.

What are termed "gelims," a sort of carpet without a pile, and the same on the two sides, are also largely made in Persia, the finest of them forming excellent coverings for the floor. The thick felts also used for the floor I frequently saw in the process of manufacture in Ispahan. They are composed entirely of wool, are sometimes an inch thick, of a brown colour, and exceedingly soft.

The few resources which Mohammedan ladies have for exercising their talents, and the ample amount of leisure which the harem system allows, has tended to render them the most expert needlewomen. Their embroideries are of the very finest, but, like other forms of art, this also seems to have deteriorated. The old pieces of embroidery are far and away the

best, but daily increasing in value and in the difficulty with which they are to be procured. The more costly of them are worked in gold and silver thread, on silk and satin. The em-



EMBROIDERY IN GOLD THREAD.

broidered shawls and portières from Kerman, with a light background and numerous small stitches in various-coloured wools, are marvels of patient industry.

The printing-press is at present but little used in Persia, and caligraphy is still regarded as a fine art. I was much amused by one lady, much celebrated for her handwriting, who was suffering from cataract, offering to give me a few lines as an adequate compensation for an operation for its removal. Some of the more highly prized books are elaborately illuminated, the binding and everything connected with them being produced by hand.

Many of my patients would, after they had been benefitted by my treatment, bring presents for my wife or myself. These presents were very various in character. One family, of whom I had treated several members, not knowing what to do to show their gratitude, consulted Abed, who suggested that they should ask me to breakfast, and then make me a present of anything I admired in the house. We accepted the invitation to breakfast, and got Abed to put some knives and forks in his pocket, in case the meal was served up in the simple native way, in which all sit round one big dish, and convey the food to their mouths with their fingers. On first arriving at the house we were served with sherbet and some sweetmeats, and were then

consulted as to what time we should like breakfast, or what is better described as *déjeuner*.

The son of our host had learnt some English at Dr Bruce's school, and his cousin, a boy about fifteen, also spoke a few words.

While the breakfast was being laid we went into the anderun, where I saw our host's wife, whom I had previously operated on, and some of the children.

We were relieved to find that the meal was served in European style. Only our host sat down with us; his son and nephew waited. The dishes, after we had helped ourselves, were carried off into the anderun. A menu, headed "The Address of Food," was provided, with the Persian and English name of each dish. Chilau and pilau are the great Persian dishes—the former a mixture of rice and meat; the latter, the same served up with melted butter.

I had been told how if, in a Persian's house, you admired anything, it was etiquette for them at once to say that it was yours, and to have it sent round to you, when you would either return it with a great number of complimentary phrases and expressions of thanks, or would send something in return which was its equivalent in value.

I consequently purposely refrained from pointedly admiring anything as we walked through their premises. This did not fit in with the plan arranged between our host and Abed, of which I was ignorant. So at last they directed my attention to a rug, and asked me what I thought of it. I remarked that it was a beautifully fine one. It was there and then rolled up and sent off to my house, and I thought I had done the very thing I was trying to avoid, until Abed explained. My wife was then presented with an antique papier-maché box, with paintings in the best Persian style on it, representing Faith Ali Shah, and the various sports indulged in in his time, such as lion-hunting, pig-sticking, falconry, and archery. To these presents our host also added a volume of Persian poetry, beautifully written on vellum. In this I requested he would write my name in Persian and English. This he did, signing his own, as is customary, as his father's son, thus—"Mostafa Morteza, Khan's son."

One of their rooms, as in several houses I went into in Ispahan, had its walls entirely plastered over with pictures from the European illustrated papers. A most amusing collection they were—

advertisements of soap mixed up with portraits of the crowned heads of Europe; the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, and Mr Gladstone speaking in the House of Commons.

After breakfast we were told that a room was prepared for us if we wished to sleep. Not, however, having become thoroughly acclimatised to Eastern ways, we had not learned to regard the mid-day *siesta* as indispensable, and had arranged to go on to the Consulate.

The gold coins of Persia have become so scarce that they have largely passed out of currency, and are frequently made into articles of jewellery. Some of the Armenians whom I operated on presented my wife with bracelets and brooches constructed out of them. One bracelet she had given her was like those worn round the ankles by Kurdish women. Suspended to a twisted bangle of gold and silver are alternate gold and silver coins, each about the size of a threepenny piece.

The silver coins in circulation in Persia are of two sorts. The newer ones are regularly circular, well-made coins of fixed sizes. The old ones are irregularly-shaped bits of silver, stamped by hand, often very much to one side,

so that only a portion of the impression is on the coin.

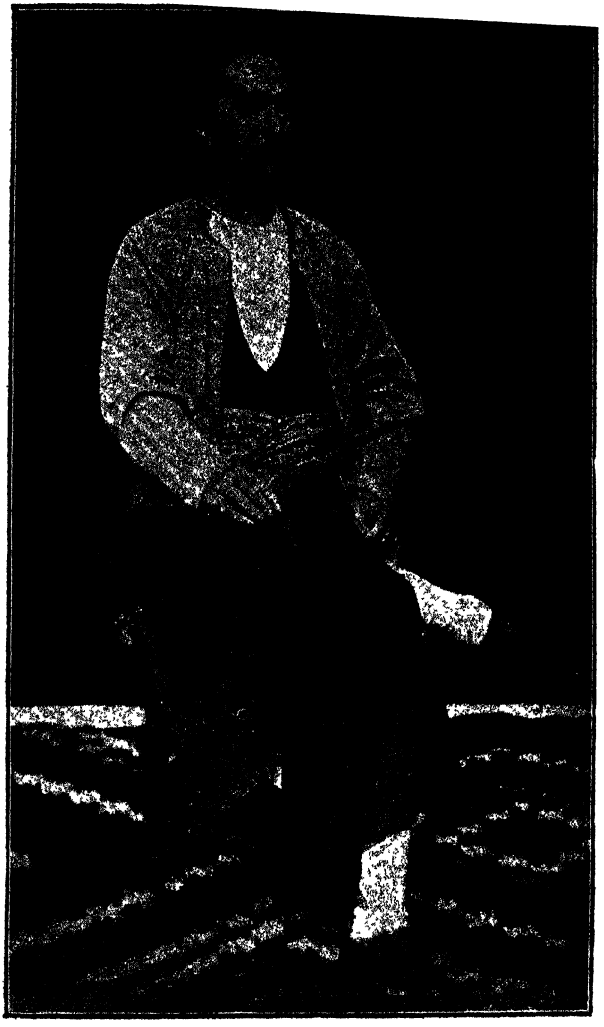
Though nominally of the same value, the rate of exchange at the bank is higher for the former than for the latter. The bank has started paper notes, but these are not much good, except for the town in which they are issued, and have by no means come into general use. The counting of the silver coins in the course of any large transaction is a great nuisance, but is done with remarkable rapidity by those accustomed to it.

Persia is practically the only country from which turquoises are obtained, and the chief source of them are the mines of Madan, near the town of Mishapur, on the road between Meshed and Teheran; they are, however, found also in other parts of Persia. Marco Polo mentions them as coming in his time from near Kerman. They were at first carried to Europe through Turkey, and hence obtained the name of turquoise. In the same way, what is known as Astrakan fur comes mostly from Persia, but is named by us after the port at which it enters Europe. It is really the skin of young lambs; the very best and most curly being that of the fœtal lamb.

Though Persia is the sole source of the turquoises, the difficulty of obtaining them there of fine quality or at a small cost is a common experience. We had large numbers brought for our inspection, set in the native rough way, in a thin silver ring. Though many of them were of a beautiful deep blue, they were mostly of irregular shape or spotted. Small ones are largely used as a form of decoration for the handles of daggers or for "kalian" tops; the larger imperfect ones are engraved as seals. The engraving of gems in a country where seals are so extensively used as in Persia is an art much cultivated.

sects in Western countries. It amused us very much, when something went wrong, the way Abed would come and explain, with a shrug of his shoulders, that not much could be expected from these Mohammedans; and how, on another occasion, Abbas would apologise for some inconvenience by saying that the people were only Armenians!

The Armenians are one of the most ancient races of mankind, who have succeeded in retaining their identity, and, like the Jews, they have managed to do so in spite of the destruction of their country and centuries of captivity. Their tradition is that they are descended from Haik, the grandson of Japhet. They occupy now, and have always lived in, the country around Mount Ararat. They were conquered by Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, and later on were subjects of the Roman Empire. At one time Zoroastrians and worshippers of Ormuzd, they early embraced Christianity. The apostles, St Bartholomew and St Thomas, are said to have preached to them, while St Gregory the illuminator, the apostle of Armenia, is credited with having established Christianity among them. To this faith they held firm when all the rest of Eastern Asia had given way to the allurements of Mohammedanism.



A WELL-KNOWN ARMENIAN OF JULFA.



AN ARMENIAN WOMAN OF JULFA.

Their racial peculiarities to this day are almost as characteristic as those of the Jews, to whom, in their acuteness in money matters and commercial capacities, they bear a strong resemblance. Their hair is dark; they have large features, brown eyes, and olive complexions.

Their language has altered considerably from what it was in ancient times, so much so that I was told only the priests could understand their religious books, which are written in old Armenian. It is said to be a remarkably rich language, and is consequently exceedingly difficult to acquire. Most of the men in Julfa have adopted European clothes; a few of them, and nearly all the women, still retain the clothes of the East. The Armenian women deck themselves out in very bright colours: a scarlet and white material is largely used by them for their dresses. They wear a large number of shawls and wraps round their heads and necks; I counted as many as seven on one woman. Most of them have a piece of white linen, which passes from round the neck across the lower part of the chin—a sort of diminutive veil. Some of the peasant women in the villages have a construction on their heads towering upwards a foot and a half high. The most

striking thing, however, in their costumes is the belt, which is composed of several massive links of silver, each about four inches long and two inches broad. This heavy girdle they wear hanging loosely about their unsupported waists.

The Armenians in Julfa prospered exceedingly during the reign of their patron, Shah Abbas the Great, and became immensely wealthy. It is related how, when the Shah visited the house of one of the most celebrated of them, before the meal was served, two large rice-trays were presented to him with covers over them, on the removal of which, the first was found to be filled with pearls, and the other with precious stones.

Under the rule of his successors, they became exposed to violence and pillage: many were forced to flee, having first buried or otherwise hidden their wealth. There still exists probably much hidden treasure in Julfa. From time to time, by some fortunate accident, it is brought to light. A man who bought a house for a mere trifle shortly afterwards discovered half-way down the well a small door, which, when opened, revealed a chamber containing a quantity of precious stones.

The Armenians of Julfa at the present time are for the most part very poor. Julfa is in some

ways like the West of Ireland, being inhabited almost entirely by the old, the infirm, or the very young, who are supported by contributions from the adult members of the community who work abroad. The young adult male Armenians of Julfa mostly make their way to India, where they find security for their property, outlets for their enterprise, and where they prosper and grow rich by the exercise of those qualities which, in their ancestors, excited the admiration of Shah Abbas the Great. In Julfa we visited the Armenian Cathedral, Convent, and Schools; we also called upon the Archbishop. The Cathedral was erected by Shah Abbas, and has a dome like the mosques; its interior is chiefly remarkable for the very dreadful representations of the tortures of the damned in the picture on its walls. The services conducted there have an elaborate ceremonial, and the congregation mostly sit on their heels.

We were in Julfa during the Armenian Easter week, which falls somewhat later than ours. At that time the women go about in the most spotless white cloaks. At the Convent we saw a number of old ladies without any distinctive garb, who were all busily engaged in knitting or crochet work. The socks and purses knitted by the

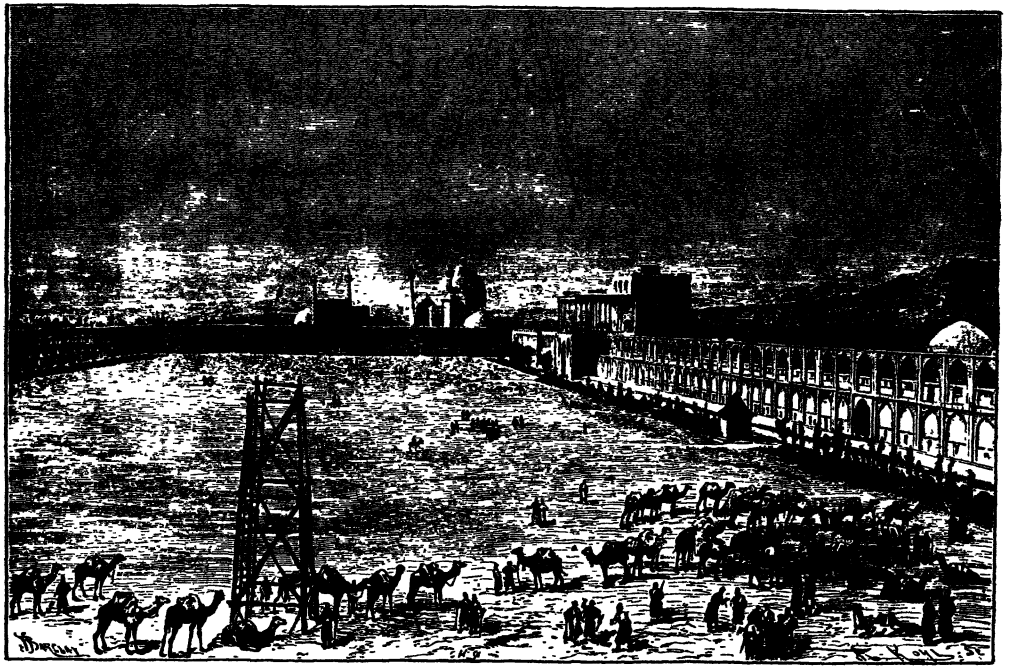
Armenian women are very fine, of the most brilliant colours and elaborate patterns. At the schools there were several large classes of children, some of whom were made to show off, and recite their lessons for our benefit. The class of small girls, with their bright eyes, clear complexions, and gay-coloured dresses, all sitting on the ground learning to sew, was a very pretty sight.

The Archbishop received us in his long black and violet robes, and tall hat. He regaled us with tea, served up in the Russian style, in tumblers, with a squeeze of lemon instead of milk. He did not apparently care much for his position in Julfa, rarely going outside his own house, and not being appreciated by his clergy. The Armenian priests have not a very good reputation, most of them being unduly fond of a very strong form of spirit, called arrak. Married men are allowed to enter the priesthood, but, once having accepted holy orders, bachelors or widowers cannot afterwards take unto themselves a wife.

The Christian ladies who live in Julfa rarely go outside it; Ispahan is a town as much unknown to them as though it were in another country. Some of the English ladies attached to the Mission had never been there, and I met Armenian women



AN ARMENIAN GIRL.



THE GREAT MEIDEN AT ISPAHAN.

who, though they had lived in Julfa all their lives, had never visited Ispahan. The sight of a lady going about unveiled in such a thoroughly Mohammedan city excites all the riff-raff of the place to manifest their religious zeal by hurling insults at the infidels. My wife was exceedingly anxious to see all that was to be seen, so one afternoon we drove into the Great Meiden, or Royal Square, which is in the heart of the city. This large open space is surrounded by handsome buildings, all unfortunately crumbling into a state of decay; it is estimated by Curzon as 560 yards long and 174 broad. This Square, when Ispahan was the capital of Persia, was the scene of many a gorgeous pageant, of many keenly-contested feats of strength; also, alas! of many ghastly tortures and executions. Over the gateway leading to the Royal Palaces on the western side, is a large verandah, with a painted ornamental roof supported by wooden pillars, into which apartments lead. It was from here that the king and his attendants looked down on the scenes and combats being enacted below.

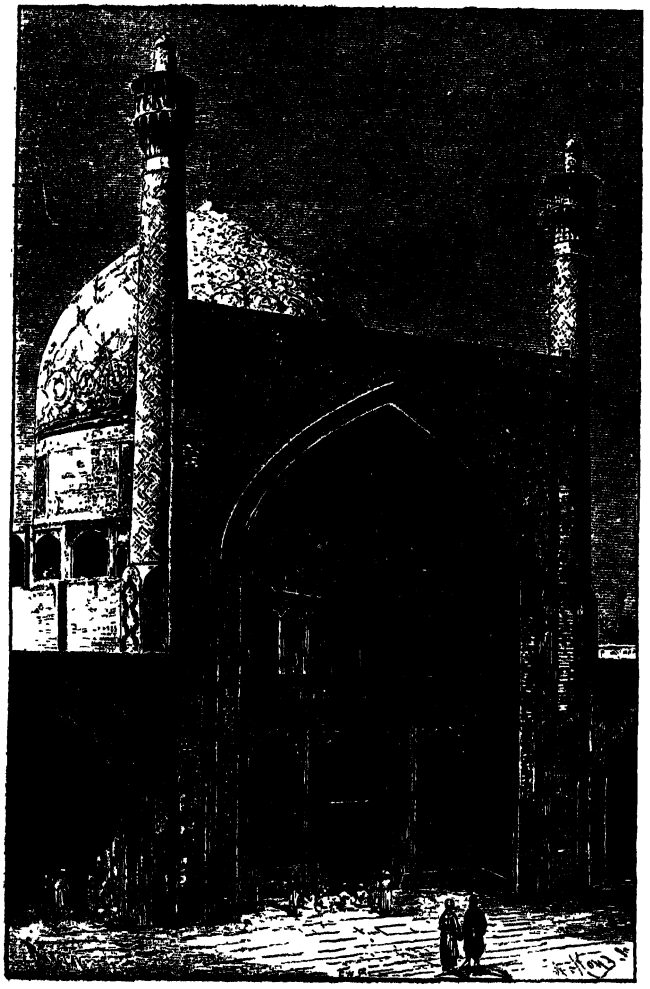
In the Square we were met by the Satib Abdullah Khan, with some of his horse soldiers and *ferashes;* we were thus effectually protected from

everything, except what might be shouted at us, to which, however, our ignorance of the language made us indifferent.

We mounted our horses and rode round the Square, going up to the entrances of the two mosques which open on to it—the mosque of the chief priest on the east side, and the Royal Mosque on the south. Across the entrance to each is hung a heavy chain for the purpose of excluding animals from the sacred enclosures.

Beyond these chains it is not advisable for any but true believers to venture. The arched domed entrance to the Royal Mosque, flanked on either side by a minaret, decorated with tiles bearing Koranic inscriptions, is very imposing. In the courtyard beyond the chains, a tank of water can be seen, designed for the ablutions which it is necessary for a Mohammedan to make, according to the directions of his Prophet, before saying his prayers.

Having ridden round the Square, we entered the Bazaar through a large highly-ornamented archway, on its north side. The Bazaar at Ispahan was, to my mind, one of the most interesting sights in Persia. At first, on entering it, so great was the contrast between the glare



THE ROYAL MOSQUE AT ISPAHAN.

outside and the sombre light which pervades within, that it took us a minute or two before we could see anything; then gradually we found ourselves amidst a wondrous scene of activity and clamour. The building, which extends for several miles, has a high arched roof, holes through which admit large, downward-slanting beams of light at regular intervals. Odours of various spices pervaded the air. On either side of the roadway were raised platforms, on which sat the turbanned salesmen, surrounded by their goods, and sucking at their "kalians." On some of the platforms we could see the articles which were sold in the front being manufactured at the back. The roadway was nowhere very broad, and it was crowded by men in flowing robes of varied hue, closely-veiled women in their sombre indigo blue outdoor costumes shuffling along with slippers without any heels, and donkeys and mules carrying every variety of goods.

Around the cook-shops the crowd was generally thicker, and from them the savoury odour of the "kabobs" arose. These are little pieces of meat stuck on a skewer and roasted over a charcoal fire, which the bare-armed cooks make bright from time to time by blowing with a pair of bellows.

The glare from the bakers' furnaces here and there shone out very bright. The bakers stood over them, naked down to the waist, picking out the large flap-jacks of bread with a pair of iron pincers as they were baked.

Out of the Bazaar lead spacious caravanseri, where heaps of bales of goods were lying about. Muleteers were engaged in loading and unloading their animals, and groups of individuals were sitting in the various arches, lazily drinking tea, while the gurgle of the water-pipe was never far distant. Different portions of the Bazaar are reserved for different trades. The noise in the brass and copper Bazaar was deafening. We rode through the linen Bazaar, where men, with large wood blocks, were stamping by hand extensive and effective patterns in madder and indigo on Manchester spun goods; then we came to the jewellers, each of whom sat behind his little store of goods, exhibited in a case guarded by a grating. As we passed by everyone looked up to gaze at so strange a sight as an unveiled lady. I could see the heavy black brows which surmounted their dark flashing eyes knitting into frowns, and the lips of their thin, sour-looking mouths muttering curses on us dogs of Christians. It

was evidently a relief to the Satib when he got us out safe again.

Shortly before leaving Julfa, to visit a patient who lived right on the opposite side of Ispahan, I had occasion to drive through the whole length of the Bazaar. As may be easily imagined, driving along such a narrow crowded roadway was no easy matter. An out-rider went before us to clear the way, but our progress was very slow. As we went along, many whom I had seen as patients welcomed me, and some threw flowers into the carriage. As we turned to come back we met one of the Princesses' black African eunuchs on horseback, who at once proceeded to assist in facilitating our progress, by riding furiously along, and slashing his stick to right and left of him, regardless of whom or what it descended upon.

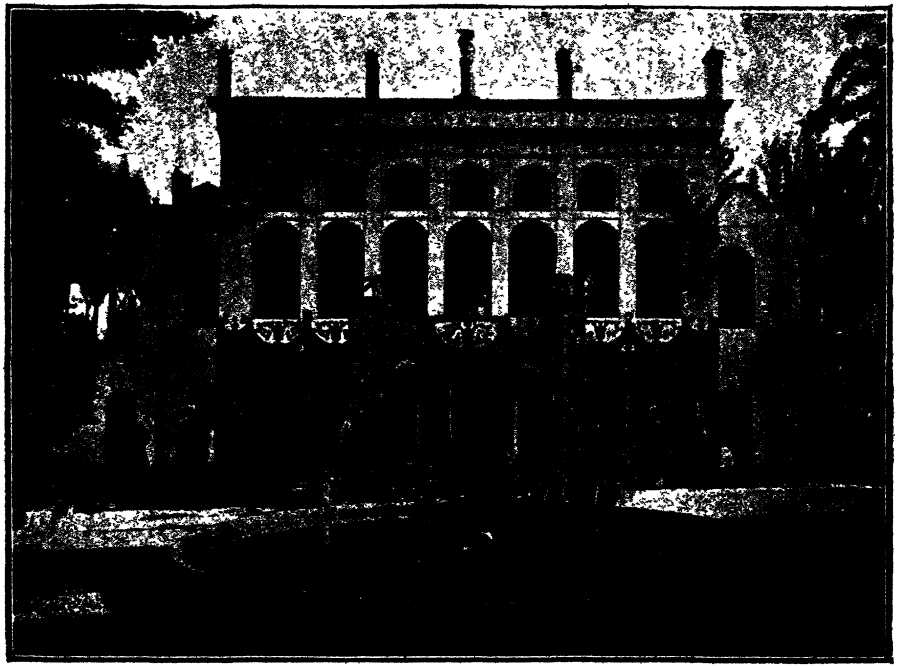
In returning to Julfa from Ispahan, we drove along the road which is called the "Chehar Bagh," or Four Gardens, from its being the site of what, previous to the time at which Shah Abbas had it laid out, were four gardens. It now presents but the ghost of its former magnificence, and must, before it fell into its present dilapidated state, have rivalled for grace and beauty any of the most famous thoroughfares of the world, with its

avenues of chenar trees, shaded paved pathways, cascades of sparkling water, marble basins, parterres planted with rose-trees, and arched gateways leading into gardens on either side. It terminates in the bridge built by Ali Verdi Khan, of which I have already spoken. Another avenue was at one time continued to the south of the bridge, in a line with the Chehar Bagh, but this is now completely ruined.

The only Europeans resident in Ispahan itself are the English Consul, Mr Preece, and the officials of the Imperial Bank. Mr Preece was away on leave while we were in Persia, and his duties were being discharged by Mr Aganoor, an Armenian of Julfa. He kindly invited us to dinner, where we met a party of the most varied nationalities — English, Scotch, Irish, French, German, Italian, Turkish, Armenian, and Persian.

In Julfa the Europeans consist of missionaries, telegraph officials, and merchants.

The English Mission Station is supported by the Church of England Missionary Society. It was started by the Rev. Dr Bruce in 1869, and when we were there was presided over by the Rev. Mr Tisdale, who was assisted by the Rev.



THE BRITISH CONSULATE AT ISPAHAN.

Mr Carless and several ladies. It has extensive buildings, comprising a church, a school, and a dispensary; the two latter are largely attended and appreciated by both Mohammedans and Armenians. As a proselytizing agency amongst the Mohammedans, the most enthusiastic admirers of the Mission can hardly consider it a success; it seems very doubtful if they can claim one real convert from amongst the followers of the Prophet. Nor is this to be wondered at, when it is remembered that the sentence of death is incurred by a renegade from the Mohammedan faith. The energies of the Mission are largely directed to the conversion of the Christian Armenians to Protestantism. Amongst the ladies attached to it, Miss Bird is conspicuous by the way she goes into Ispahan, in spite of the insults and threats with which she is assailed; and, in so doing, risks her life in the cause to which she is devoted. Her recklessness is a constant source of anxiety to the English officials, who are naturally desirous that, as a British subject, no harm should befall her. It is a question calling for serious consideration, whether proselytizing missions in such a country as Persia do not defeat rather than promote the cause of Christianity, by exciting or

intensifying antipathy to European and American ideas. They certainly tend to endanger the safety of all Europeans resident there.

Besides the English Mission there is a French Catholic one, of whom Père Pascal is the head. There are thus three sects of Christians in Julfa—the Protestants, the Roman Catholics, and the Armenians. Unscrupulous Armenians, I was told, vary their allegiance to one or the other, according to which promises to be the more profitable for them.

To find your way about in Julfa is a most difficult business, on account of the great height and similarity in the appearance of the walls on either side of the narrow lanes. There are, of course, no names to the streets, or sign-posts to guide you. At night a servant used to go before us with a lantern to light the way, otherwise we should soon have found ourselves putting a foot into one of the foul-smelling "jubes," or ditches.

The lanterns used in Persia are made of greased calico; they are in shape like the Chinese lanterns, and have engraved brass tops. A single candle in one of them gives a remarkable amount of light. The size of the lantern used is supposed to vary with the importance of the owner.



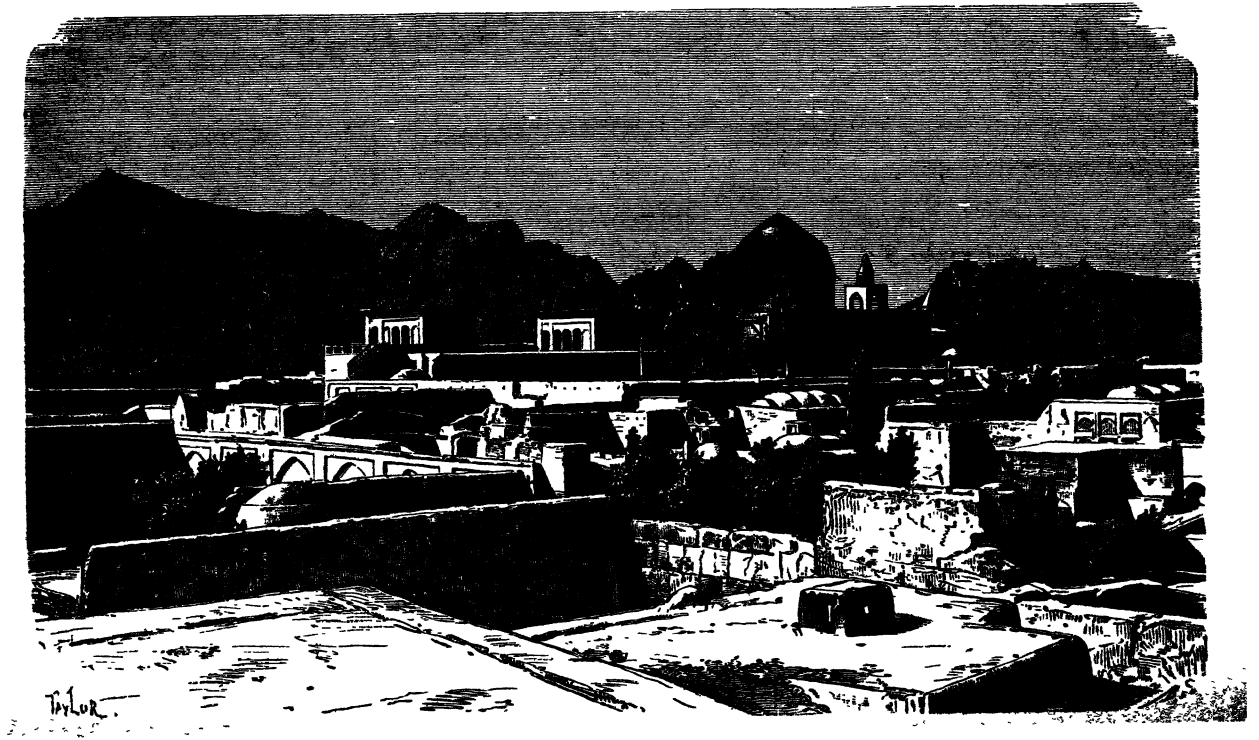
A ROAD IN JULFA.

Our latch-key amused us immensely; it was quite a foot long, and would have formed a handy weapon of defence in case of an attack. Our servant used to carry it stuck in his girdle.

On the outskirts of Julfa are numerous opium fields, and soon after our arrival they were a mass of white and purple flowers; later on, when the capsules had formed, we saw the labourers in the early morning scratching them with an instrument having four parallel blades, and then in the evening collecting the gum which had oozed during the day from the incisions. The opium trade in Persia has considerably increased during the last few years, and fields which were formerly covered with wheat are now used for the poppy, which is more remunerative. A rise in the price of bread has ensued, and bread riots frequently occur. I met one day, as I was driving into Ispahan, a crowd of rioters going to petition the Prince Governor. An Oriental mob is a remarkably picturesque sight compared with an English one. The habit of eating or smoking opium is largely indulged in by the Persians of all classes.

Many medicinal gums besides opium come from Persia, namely asafœtida, galbanum, sagapenum, and opoponax. It is, however, such a difficult

country to obtain accurate information from, that there is still considerable uncertainty from what plants they are derived. Before leaving London, Mr Holmes, of the Pharmaceutical Society, asked me to obtain any information concerning them which I could. I heard that asafœtida plants grew on a mountain just south of Julfa, called the Khu-i-Suffa, and I determined to get some of them. For permission to go there, I had to get a pass from the Prince, as he objects to having anyone wandering about and disturbing the ibex he is so fond of shooting. I started one morning at sunrise with Mr Stainton and Mr Geyer, the agent for the firm of Messrs Zeigler & Co., riding as far as the foot of the hill. Outside the streets of Julfa there is a large district covered with ruined mud-walls, which extends for some distance from the town, showing what a much more extensive place it once was. There is one long broad road, bounded on either side by ruins, which must once have been an imposing street. It is known amongst the Europeans as the "Race Course," and is the one place near Julfa where a good safe gallop can be obtained without the fear of finding yourself buried in a "Kanat."


TAYLOR.

The Armenian cemetery, in which a few Europeans are buried, lies between Julfa and Khu-i-Suffa. It, like the Mohammedan cemeteries, is not marked off by any wall or fence from the surrounding desert.

About half-way up Khu-i-Suffa, after a steep climb, we came to a stone tank filled with clear cold water, which drops from the overhanging rock. In the crevices of the rock around, forming a strange contrast to the surrounding waste, were some beautiful little maidenhair ferns. On nearing the summit we found the asafœtida plants mostly about two feet high, but not as yet in blossom. I went up again about a month later, in order to get one in full bloom, and then found, to my surprise, that they had nearly all been eaten off, I suppose by the ibex. I had to search for some while before I could find a perfect specimen. This I managed to preserve and take to Mr Holmes, who tells me it differs in some respects to those with which he was already familiar.

The view from the top of Khu-i-Suffa well repays the exertion required in getting there. You can look down upon Ispahan and Julfa, and see the desert coming up to the very doors

of the houses. You see the reflection of the rising sun flashed back with sparkling brilliancy from the tiled domes of the mosques. You can trace the river of life flowing through the town, with a faint morning mist arising from it, and follow its fertile valley to the west, where numerous villages peep up here and there, half hidden in the verdure of the trees which surround them. If you turn to the east you see it going to a drear and desert land, to lose itself there in a salt marsh. You can trace the northern and southern route to and from Ispahan, see the first stage out in either direction, and follow the road until it becomes lost in the brown hills, which bound the scene in all directions. Everything is viewed through a brilliantly clear atmosphere, which adds a charm I cannot express in words, and which must be seen to be realised.

After we had been in Julfa about a month, we made an excursion out to see what are called the "Shaking Minarets." We crossed the Zendeh Rud, and rode along its north bank westwards, through the thickly-wooded gardens which border it, and past several out-lying villages. We went close by one of the pigeon towers, which form such a conspicuous feature around Ispahan.

These structures are something like Martello towers, with a little turret on the top of them, and in their interior contain a number of small separate compartments. The object of providing for and keeping pigeons on such a gigantic scale was to obtain guano with which to manure the melon beds. These towers have now fallen out of use, and are largely ruined, melons not being produced to anything like the extent they used to be.

I did not taste or see any of the delicious spring melons described by Chardin. He said: "There is a certain sort of melon that the spring produces; it is very insipid, and melts in the mouth like water. The Persian physicians advise people to eat plentifully of it, and they say it is necessary to purge one's self with it, in the same manner as herbs are used to purge horses, and at the same time. This is a thing they never fail to do as constantly as the year comes round, in the month of April. They will eat at that time a matter of ten or twelve pounds of melon a day for a fortnight or three weeks together, and this is as much for the health's sake as to please the palate, for they look upon it as a great refresher and cooler of their blood,

and if a man is fallen away it will restore him again and make him grow fat.

"They tell you a story upon this subject of two Arabian physicians who, coming to Ispahan in quest of business, came exactly in the season of these *guermec*, and, seeing the streets full of this fruit, they said one to another: 'Let us go further on; don't let us stay here; there is nothing for us to do in this place.'"

We stopped at one of the Prince's hunting-boxes, where we met Satib Abdullah Khan, who had prepared tea, ices, fruit, and sweetmeats for our refreshment. The chief room in the interior of the building was covered on the ceiling and walls with numerous pieces of looking-glass, set at various angles, and with coloured prints of European ladies.

We loitered a long time in the delightful garden attached, which was crowded with roses then in full bloom, and through which streams of water flowed, falling here and there in little cascades, and in other places rising in fountains.

The tomb of Sheikh Abdullah, over which the shaking minarets are situated, is about six miles from Ispahan. An arched recess, built of mud bricks, covers the sarcophagus; at either

extremity of the arch rises a not very beautiful minaret, in the interior of each of which is a spiral staircase, on ascending one of them and pressing against the wall, the tower begins to sway from side to side. This oscillation, however, is not confined to the tower pressed upon, but is conveyed across the arch to the opposite one, which also sways to and fro. This peculiar result of the structural formation of the building is, of course, attributed by the credulous natives to the power of the holy man's bones who is laid to rest there. Every *seyd*, or descendant of the Prophet, who has been killed by an enemy of the Sheah persuasion, is regarded as a martyr, and honoured with a tomb which is generally supposed to work miracles. Throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom, in almost every town or village, is seen one or more of the domed roofs which have been erected over the graves of these martyrs.

On leaving the shrine we had pointed out to us some ruins at the summit of an isolated mountain, as the remains of one of the ancient fire-altars of the worshippers of Ormuzd.

"Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak

Of earth o'er gazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, there to seek
Thè spirit in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear'd of human hands. Come and compare
Columns and idol dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes, or circumscribe thy prayer."

—*Byron.*

CHAPTER X.

MOONLIGHT DRIVES THROUGH DESERT PLAINS.

We left Julfa for Teheran on 15th June. The mules, of course, were late in arriving. It was 11 o'clock before they were loaded ready to start; and they went off with the servants in the very hottest part of the day. It was a sad and unpleasant business saying farewell to all those who had been so kind and friendly to us during our two months' stay in Julfa. At 4 P.M. we drove through Ispahan; it being Friday, the Bazaar, except for a few fruit and cook shops, was all closed.

Mr and Mrs Elias, Mr Stainton, Mr Seth, and the Satib Abdullah Khan, accompanied us to a garden on the outskirts of the town, where we had tea before saying a final adieu. We reached the chapar-khaneh at Gez that evening, the small upper room in which our servants had already prepared for us on our arrival, so that

the only thing that we had to do was to have our dinner and go to bed, to be ready for an early start the next morning. To bed we went, but not to sleep. The summer's warmth had awoke into activity in these mud-walled hostelries a quantity of vermin, and we had a lively night of it. We were quite ready to turn out two hours before sunrise, at 3 A.M.

We had with us the same servants as had accompanied us up from Bushire, but a different muleteer and charvadars, the former younger and more active, but not such a picturesque figure as old Hadjii. A Bakhtiari man also went with us, whose eye I afterwards removed in Teheran; he had orders from the Ilkhani to render us all the assistance he could. He carried a long single-barrelled gun slung over his back, from which he never parted, not even when he was assisting Mahmood to do up the bedding. We were considerably delayed in starting by the Mohammedan coachmen, who insisted on saying their prayers before sunrise. We reached our destination, Murchakhar, at 8 A.M., the caravan arriving three hours later. From 8 to 5 it was intensely hot, and there was nothing to be done but to lie still and to try to keep the flies away. The evening was deliciously cool and refreshing.

There was a glorious sunset; the mountains in the distance with their ragged, toothed outline assumed an indigo tint, while the sky was gold, purple, and pale blue. An immense stretch of corn just ripe and ready for the sickle extended for a considerable distance in front of the chapar-khaneh.

It was on this plain of Murchakhar that Nadir Shah fought his famous battle with the Afghans. Murchakhar, like many Persian villages, is surrounded with high walls, and access to it is gained through doors of immense thickness, rendered additionally strong by means of irregularly shaped plates of iron nailed on to them. As you approach such villages across the plain they look like forts.

The nearly full moon was sinking out of sight as we started in the carriage the next morning at 3 A.M. The first hour and a half before the sun rose was very dark. We had not got far when we came to an awkward bit, where the horses had to be taken out and the carriage let down a sort of precipice, in doing which it ran against an opposite wall, and knocked one of the postillions over, giving him a small scalp wound. At the end of the stage we again got into difficulties,

sticking in the middle of a stream at the foot of a steep incline. The line of country we traversed was not beautiful, a series of bare plains surrounded by hills, and scattered over with shrubs of camel-thorn. We diverged from the usual and most direct route to Kum, it being impassable by a carriage, and took a road lying to the west of it; by so doing we missed visiting Kashan.

The line we went is one not often followed, and there were no chapar-khanehs along it. At Mehma, where we stopped for the heat of the day until midnight, we had the tent pitched at a beautiful spot near a stream of clear running water, filled with fish, and by some standing corn. The inhabitants of the village came in crowds and stopped a long time enjoying such a strange sight as was afforded by an European's encampment. A broken "kanat," with clear, cold, running water afforded us a delicious bathing-place. In the brilliant light of the full moon at midnight we left Mehma, and after proceeding a short distance our postillions found they had missed the road. Only one of them, it turned out, had ever been along it before.

We continued wandering about aimlessly for some

time, and at last met a shepherd who directed us right. Altogether, we went about two *farsakhs* further than we had need to do. It was very striking, the long stretches of country we passed through without there being a sign of cultivation or any human habitation. We passed a few antelope, but saw no other wild animals. The flowers scattered about over these deserted plains were some of them very beautiful. I picked some orchids (*Orchis saccatatem*) Astragulus, Delphinum, and wild pinks (*Dianthus crinitus*).

Rabat Turk was the name of the next village at which we stayed, where we again had the tent pitched. The monotony of the following night's journey was varied by the carriage twice sticking in swamps, when all hands were required in assisting to extricate it. We were told that the Prince Zille Sultan's son, in passing one of these marshes in his carriage a short time previously, got it so firmly fixed that a number of men from the adjoining village were occupied several hours in digging it out. We congratulated ourselves, therefore, in having got over as easily as we did. The amount of knocking about the carriage stood was something wonderful: every now and then came tremendous jolts, when all its joints seemed strained to their utmost, and it

would not have surprised us if it had come in half. Travelling at night was delightfully cool. Just before sunrise it was so cold that we were glad to cover ourselves with our rugs, which, however, we soon discarded when once the sun made its appearance above the hill-tops.

The closely-fitting felt caps and the sheep-skin hats which the Persians wear seem strangely ill adapted for the climate they live in; being absolutely devoid of any brim, they afford no shade for the face. Some of our servants and many travellers we met on the road had supplemented this defect by fixing on a movable shade in front; this they inclined towards the side from which the sun came. A head-covering with a peak is regarded as a sign of Christianity. At Dillyjon we spent the day in the "Mehman-khaneh," or strangers' house, which is usually to be found in most Persian villages. We had a first floor room, with windows on all sides of it. The villagers climbed on to the roofs of the surrounding houses, anxious to catch a glimpse of the European lady, most of them never having seen one before. Two of the wives of the "Ked-Khoda," or head-man of the village, visited us in order to enjoy a good stare. He

later on sent us a present of some fruit, the bearers of which had to be duly tipped.

One of the dishes in which the fruit came towards evening disappeared, and for nearly four hours the owner's servants and ours shouted at one another, the former accusing the latter of stealing it, and the latter protesting they had not got it. They hurled at one another all these expressions of disrespect with which Persians are ever so apt and ready; they sent one another's burnt fathers to grill in Jehanum, and they defiled all their ancestors' graves; ultimately, long after both sides had exhausted themselves and separated, we discovered the missing tray beneath some papers in our room.

We left Dillyjon at 3 A.M., and had not got very far before we were again off the road, and found ourselves driving over a series of deep ruts and irrigation channels. After a little of this the front springs of the carriage commenced to flatten out. The chief postillion, who was responsible for the carriage, was a short, stumpy, round-shouldered man, with a venomous-looking, divergent squint. When he jumped down and found the springs giving way, he commenced whipping the ground with rage. The strapping and binding up of the

springs took some time, which we occupied in finding the right road again. Another delay was occasioned a little later on by the front postillion getting disturbances in his digestive apparatus, caused probably by eating raw plums and sour milk, both of which delicacies all Persians are very fond. We induced him so far to put away his religious principles as to swallow a little raw brandy, after which he felt better, and we were able to proceed. At Naizar we had another pleasant camping-ground under the shade of some thick mulberry-trees, with a running stream close by.

In the evening some peasants commenced ploughing the field opposite us. The plough they used was constructed on the most elementary principles. It was drawn by oxen. There was only one handle to it, shaped like that of a spade, upon which the driver pressed as the blade was being drawn along. Some Nomads had their tents pitched near to us. These had roofs composed of goats' hair, and sides constructed of rushes. The owners were very shy, and frightened at being photographed. Goats, chickens, and children were all mixed up in the interior of the tents. They had made little tunnel-like holes in



A KURDISH GIRL SPINNING WOOL.

the ground for the hens to lay in, and had also sunk in the ground a furnace, composed of condensed mud, for baking bread. The process of making the flat sheets of unleavened bread of the country both in the cities and villages is the same. The wheat is ground by water-mills; the flour, made into dough, is divided into pieces about the size and shape of a penny bun. These are then beaten out quite flat and placed inside the furnace, which is heated by burning dried animals' dung. The dough adheres to the side of the furnace, and when sufficiently baked is picked off and removed with a pair of pincers. If allowed to stay too long, it falls off and drops into the fire beneath.

The bread thus produced varies in consistency, being sometimes so fleshy it can be folded up like a napkin; at other times thin, crisp, and so light that on one occasion while we were sitting at a meal the wind caught it and blew it some distance away.

We passed during the day several fields of cotton plants, which were just beginning to come up. It is a very common sight to see women spinning cotton with a small hand-wheel, and wool with a shuttle, which they carry about with them as they walk along.

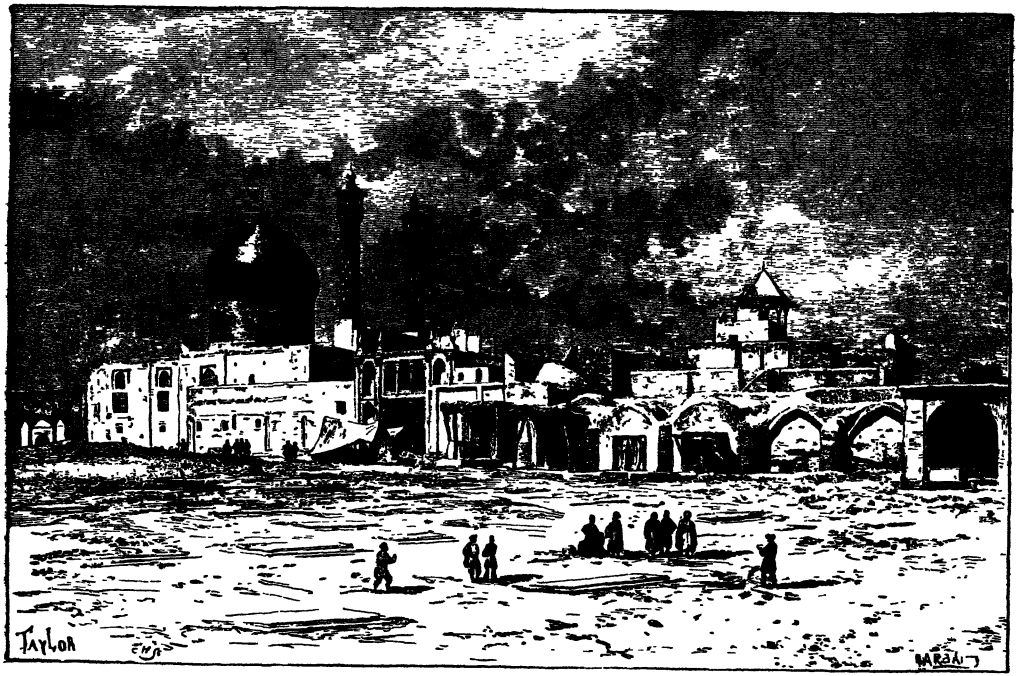
We went to bed in the carriage in the evening

in order to allow our caravan to get a good start of us, and to reach Kum first the following day. At midnight the horses were put in, and we slept as well as the jolting would allow until sunrise. For a few hours in the middle of the day we stopped at an orchard containing apples, apricots, pomegranates, grapes, and green figs—the three latter not yet ripe. The apricots were exceedingly plentiful; some of them, on account of their extreme sweetness, are called "lumps of sugar." No trouble whatever is taken in orchards in pruning, thinning, or training the trees; all things grow as they please.

On continuing our drive in the afternoon, the golden cupola which covers the shrine of the immaculate Fatima, sister of the Imam Reza, soon came into sight, surrounded by green and blue tiled minarets, and flashing back the rays of the sinking sun.

The road we had come from Murchakhar to Kum is not one which is marked on Curzon's map. By following it, instead of the one east of the "chaper" route, which goes through Natenz and Kashan, we saved a stage and gained a day.

At the Telegraph Station, in the centre of Kum, we passed a most unpleasant night; it was so



TOMB OF FATIMA AT KUM.

exceedingly close and hot, and the mosquitoes got through the netting. We were, however, rejoiced at the expectation of being able to get to Teheran in twenty-four hours. We were told there was a good carriage road between them, and a regular system of posting horses for carriages all along the route. I went the first thing the next morning to the hotel (for Kum actually boasts of a structure so called) to make arrangements, and decided to take the Prince's carriage and four hired horses, to be changed at each stage.

At Kum is one of the largest cemeteries in Persia. Several Shahs of the Sefavi and Kajar dynasties are interred there. The pious Sheah likes to have his bones buried in the vicinity of those of some holy Imam, whose assistance he hopes to gain on the Day of Judgment. Mule-loads of dead bodies are constantly arriving from all parts of the kingdom to be interred in the sacred ground around the shrine of the famed Fatima.

The belief in the sanctity of certain places of burial recalls how at one time the soil around Grey Friars' Church in London, over which the Bluecoat boys now run and play, was held to be greatly superior to that of any churchyard. Most

of the dead, it is stated, were buried in the habit of the Grey Friars, as if to cheat Peter into a belief in their sanctity.*

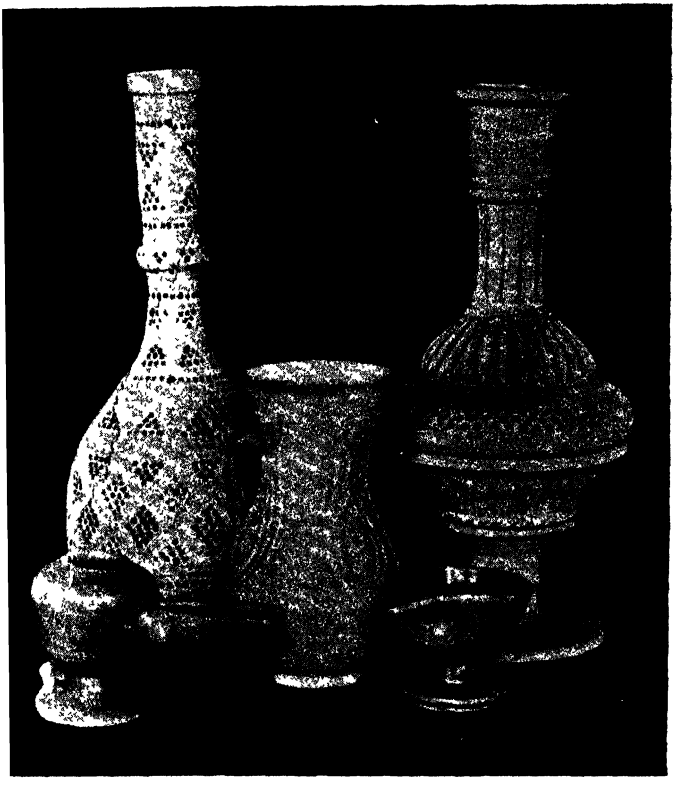
The shrine of Fatima at Kum is a place of sanctuary, no matter how foul the deed of which the culprit may be guilty. Once beyond the chain which guards the entrance to the Mosque, he is safe from his pursuers and from the hands of justice.

The inhabitants of this sacred town have the reputation of being great fanatics; they are most rigid and orthodox in the outward observance of the customs and ceremonies of Mohammedanism. Their crabbed and cadaverous countenances all speak of a narrow-minded and intolerant creed.

I was able, however, to stroll about the Bazaar, make purchases, take photographs, and stare into the sacred precincts of the Mosque so far as the chain would allow me, without exciting nearly so much attention as would be caused by a Persian with his flowing abbé, his baggy trousers, and his voluminous turban, in the middle of Regent Street.

The Bazaar at Kum is not nearly so extensive or lofty as that at Ispahan, but, like it, was full of interest.

* Besant's "History of London."



A GROUP OF EARTHENWARE FROM KUM.

Earthenware vessels and water-bottles are largely made at Kum from a special clay found in the vicinity. They have a very porous structure, which permits of evaporation of the fluid contained in them, so that it retains a delicious coolness in the hottest weather. They are usually quite plain and devoid of ornamentation, but sometimes have a number of little raised bright blue spots on the surface, arranged in geometrical patterns, in imitation of turquoises.

A large number of earthenware articles, of a cheap kind, and the beads so much worn as charms, with a bright blue glaze, were exposed for sale there.

The fruit-stalls at that time of year were exceedingly well stocked with apricots, huge watermelons, pomegranates, and cucumbers, which latter are regarded as a fruit, and eaten like apples; they are short, straight, and very juicy.

We had arranged to start from Kum at 7 P.M. Abed was to go on the box with the chief postillion, who was to drive, while the "chapar" boy rode one of the front horses. The caravan and the other servants were to follow as fast as they could. We had just enough food packed away in the carriage to last us twenty-four hours,

when we hoped to be in Teheran. We began badly. It was two hours before we could get any horses at all, and when we did, the front pair absolutely refused to move, and others had to be substituted.

These were exceedingly tired, having done a journey a short time previously, and required an unmerciful amount of beating.

At the end of the first stage the only change of horses available were some which could barely stand up. So, after waiting some two and a half hours, during which time the old ones had a feed, we started with them again, sending a man on in front with one horse, which still had a kick left in him, to meet us with others half-way from the stage in front. When we commenced going again the leaders could not be kept in front of the hinder pair, and the carriage nearly got upset by running into some stones. Any likelihood of damage to the carriage was sure to raise the ire of our villainous-looking postillion; he and the "chapar" boy dismounted, and I afterwards found he had proceeded to give him a sound thrashing. Another boy was then put in his place, but he did not succeed much better. The leaders could not be induced to keep the traces taut, and kept getting behind.

The sun was now up, and we were descending a steep incline, while to our right we saw sparkling with exceeding brilliancy a large salt-water lake. At the bottom of the hill we met the horses we had sent on for and with much whipping, and pushing from behind, we at length succeeded in getting the carriage up the opposite height to one of the new style of hostelries, several of which have been erected between Kum, Teheran, and Kasvin, to replace the old-fashioned caravanseri. They have large verandahs in front of them, and apartments with casements containing chairs, tables, and bedsteads, but filthily dirty, and teeming with insect life.

The road we were traversing was a very good one, and was made some years ago by the direction of the present Sadr Azem. The old road lay to the east, and was more direct. To have induced the inhabitants of Persia to traverse any other road than that which they and their ancestors had used for generations would have been impossible, whatever increased facilities it might afford. The Sadr Azem recognised this, and in order to make his road a success, he had recourse to a bold and effectual measure. Some dams built by Shah Abbas,

which kept the small river, the Kara Chai, from overflowing, mysteriously broke down, and the great salt lake which lay glittering before us was the result. There is a tradition amongst the inhabitants of the district, Mr Keith Abbot states, that a sea formerly existed in this plain, and that the drying up of its waters was one of the miracles which occurred on the birth of Mahomet. On the river Kara Chai, a little to the west of the road we were travelling, is the town of Savé, which is the present representative of the city Saba, from which Marco Polo states the three Magi set out when they went to worship Jesus Christ, and where also they were buried in three large and beautiful monuments side by side. He goes on to describe how the people told him that, "in old times, three kings of that country went away to worship a prophet that was born, and they carried with them three manner of offerings—gold, frankincense, and myrrh; in order to ascertain whether that prophet were God, or an earthly king, or a physician. 'For,' said they, 'if he take the gold, then he is an earthly king; if he take the incense, he is God; if he take the myrrh, he is a physician.'"

Mr Keith Abbot, who went to Savé in 1849,

found it the most ruinous town he had ever visited, could see nothing of the tombs, nor hear anything of the tradition.

At one time there were European managers at each stage between Kum, and Teheran, and Russian carriage horses were employed. It was then possible to do the journey, as we had hoped to, in twenty-four hours; but all this has now broken down, and under Persian management, there is nothing but delay everywhere. We obtained rather better horses at Kush-i-Nasret, and got along at a better pace through the dreary hilly district to Kinaregird, which the Persians have named "The valley of the Angel of Death," and which their fears and fancies have peopled with demons and other fabulous beings. At Kinaregird there were absolutely no horses available, and there we were stranded eleven *farsakhs* from Teheran with very little food, and nothing to do, but, in the Persian phraseology, to spread the carpet of hope, and to smoke the pipe of expectation. It was midnight before we were able to get off; at Huseinabad, there was again the same delay in getting fresh horses, protracted arguments ensued as to whether they should be harnessed abreast, or two and two.

At Kahrizak the snow-clad peak of the mighty Demavend, the highest peak of the Elburz range of mountains which lies just north of Teheran, was full in view—

> "Whose head in wintry grandeur towers,
> And whitens with eternal sleet;
> While summer, in a vale of flowers,
> Is sleeping rosy at his feet."—*Moore.*

Between Kahrizak and Teheran there is much of interest. Tired and hungry, we paid but little attention to anything but getting on to our journey's end. The ruins of the ancient Median city of Rhages lay buried around, and we passed close to the shrine of the Sheik Abdul Azis, which is so much visited by the pious devotees of Teheran. Between it and Teheran, a distance of six miles, runs the only railway in Persia. The familiar sound of the engine whistle falling on our ears seemed to awaken us from the Rip-Van-Winkle-like dream, which for the last four months we had been living in.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KING OF KINGS, THE ASYLUM OF THE UNIVERSE.

TEHERAN is surrounded by high walls, built during the reign of the present Shah, but it by no means fills the space enclosed by them. A squalid area covered with dirt and rubbish intervenes between the walls and the outskirts of the city. Teheran is a peculiar mixture of the European and Asiatic, —mosques and gas-lamps, bazaars and tram-cars, and similar incongruities. In the Bazaar itself also, the commodities exposed for sale are a curious collection of cheap machine-made European articles, and native hand-made goods. All this may mean progress, but the transition stage in which things are at present is by no means pleasing. The undiluted, pure Asiatic towns, such as Shiraz and Ispahan, were infinitely more to my taste. We did not see much of Teheran. The night of our arrival we lodged at the hotel, there having been some mistake in the arrangements at

the Prince's Palace, where we were to have stayed. The hotel is kept by an Englishman, who originally came to Persia as the Prince Zille Sultan's gardener, and his wife; they made us very comfortable the short time we were with them. The morning after our arrival we were astonished in the middle of our dressing to see Abbas (whom we had left with the caravan) appear, very moist with perspiration, and covered with dust. He had just come in, and was smiling all over with delight at having got to us again. "Mem Sahib told me to come quickly," he said; "and here I am." "But the caravan," I exclaimed; "what have you done with that? Have you left that behind?" "No," he said, "they are all here"; and he went on to tell us how the mule man had sat down and cried because his mules were being driven so fast, and how he had insisted that Mem Sahib wanted him, and so they must go on.

Mr Cunningham Greene, the Charge d'Affaires of the British Legation, invited us to spend the day at their summer residence at Gulahek, and we drove there up a steep, but fairly well-made road.

Gulahek is a small village situated six miles north of Teheran, and on a much higher level

It is the property of the British nation, and its inhabitants are British subjects, under the jurisdiction of the British Consul. The houses of the different members of the Legation are situated in a large garden, which, with its tall trees, shaded walks, and streams of running water, was deliciously cool. We therefore gladly accepted the invitation of Dr Odling, the Legation's Medical Officer, to come and stay with him and his wife, and escape from the intense closeness and heat of the city at that time of year.

While at Gulahek, I was twice sent for to visit His Imperial Majesty the King of Kings, "The Asylum of the Universe," as Shah Nasr-ed-din's faithful subjects term him. On the first occasion one of his carriages was sent to conduct me to his summer palace of Sultanetabad on the slope of the Elburz mountains. The carriage was a small brougham, lined inside with light blue satin, and drawn by four horses with madder-stained tails. I was first taken to the apartments of the Azis Sultan, a boy for whom the Shah has a great affection, whom he brought with him on his last visit to England, upon whom he has lavished honours and favours, and who, it is needless to say, other members of the Court cordially hate. There

I met Dr Tolison, a French doctor, who for many years has been the Shah's special medical attendant, and Dr Shynder, also a Frenchman, who now accompanies the Shah on his travelling or hunting expeditions.

Persian monarchs always seem to have placed more reliance in the medical skill of foreign countries than in that of their own professors of the healing art.

Herodotus tells us that Cyrus the Great sent to Amasis, the king of Egypt, a request that he would send him the most skilful of all eye-doctors. This oculist, indignant at being separated from his wife and children, and given over to the Persians, later on advised Cambyses, Cyrus's successor, to ask for Amasis's daughter in marriage. The deception practised in answer to this request was the immediate cause of the invasion and conquest of Egypt by Persia.

Darius Hystaspes had a Greek physician, Democedes, who was made a prisoner by the Persians at the island of Samos. He acquired a great reputation by curing the king's foot and the queen's breast. Of more recent times, the services of the Franks have usually been sought by the Persian monarchs.

On the arrival of Dr Galezowski and Dr Odling, we were summoned into the presence of the Shah.

Shah Nasr-ed-din is the fourth monarch of the Kajar Dynasty, which was established by the eunuch Aga Mohammed Khan, the chief of the Turkish tribe of Kajer. According to their historians, they can trace their descent to Terek, the son of Japhet, the son of Noah. For centuries they have inhabited the province of Astrabad. Aga Mohammed Khan succeeded in uniting Persia into one kingdom in 1794, after it had been split up for many years by religious feuds. He was a despot of the most unnatural cruelty, and was ultimately assassinated, being succeeded by his nephew, the famous Faith Ali Shah, who is credited with having had 1000 wives and 260 children.

Shah Nasr-ed-din is the great-grandson of this prolific monarch. He is now sixty-three years of age, and has reigned over Persia for forty-seven years. He does not, however, look so old, and is still hale and vigorous. His breast on this my first visit was ablaze with jewels of great size and brilliancy. In his high astrakan hat he wore a representation of the lion and the sun, set in brilliants, and a large flat diamond, which, from

its size and shape, must, I think, have been the famous "Sea of Light." After some conversation he told Dr Galezowski and myself how he wished us to examine the eyes of one of his wives, which we proceeded to do.

This poor lady, who was a great favourite of the Shah's, died shortly before I left Teheran. The Shah, I was told, did not attend her funeral in person, but viewed it from one of his palaces through a telescope.

The day before I started on my homeward journey from Gulahek the Shah sent for me, to consult me in reference to his own eyes. He was then staying in a palace still higher up the slope of the Elburz Mountains than the one at which I had previously seen him. I drove over there with Dr Odling, and we were first shown into the Sadr-Azem, or Grand Vizier, who was transacting business in a small courtyard, where he received us, and where the usual tea, ices, and sherbet were served.

I had met the Sadr-Azem previously at dinner at the British Legation. He is a genial man, of about thirty-eight, who, notwithstanding the cares and anxieties connected with holding the most important post in the kingdom, is well capable of

enjoying the good things of this life. He visited England with the Shah, but does not speak English. For several years he resisted being raised to the title of Sadr-Azem, being content with the lower one of Amin-es-Sultan, "the Trusted of the King."

Perhaps the darkest page in the reign of the present Shah is that connected with the death of his first Grand Vizier, Mirza Taki Khan, a man of exceptional ability, though of humble origin, who had assisted the Shah in governing the province of Azerbaijan before his accession to the throne.

When he first took over the government of the country everything was in confusion. Several rival claimants for the throne were raising rebellions in different towns; every department of the State was full of abuses. These he set himself steadily to reform, with an honesty and truthfulness quite unknown in the Persian nature in modern times. He appointed governors and other officials on account of their merits, and not according to the size of the bribe they offered. Whatever he promised he strenuously endeavoured to carry out. As an example of the great importance he attached to the unalterable character of his decrees, I was told how, on one occasion,

he made a mistake in the name in appointing a governor to a province, and rather than make any change in what he had once allowed to be publicly announced, he permitted the wrong man, whom he had named by mistake, to hold the post.

He improved considerably the condition of the army, providing the soldiers with regular and proper pay. So great was he in the Shah's favour that he married the monarch's only sister. During the three years he was in power he effected wonders; and it is not too much to say that, had all the reforms he instituted been perpetuated, Persia would have been effectually dragged from the slough of despond, and made one of the best-governed countries of the East. Unfortunately, the changes he effected created against him a host of enemies—lovers of the old order of corruption, and those who regarded him as an ambitious upstart of low birth, only wanting to grasp as much power as possible for himself.

These persons set to work to poison the young Shah's mind against his sagacious Grand Vizier. For a long time he turned a deaf ear to all their stories and insinuations, but at last they so worked upon his fears that he called upon his minister to resign. This, however, was not enough for them.

As long as Mirza Taki Khan lived, the Shah might relent and recall him, and nothing but his death would satisfy them. This, in a moment of weakness, they ultimately induced the Shah to consent to; and he was bled to death at Kashan, where he had settled down to live in retirement. When all was over, the Shah's remorse at the death of the minister who had done so much to seat him on his throne was very great, and he had his two sons betrothed to the murdered man's infant daughters.

When the British Legation first came to Persia, considerable difficulty arose about the members of it appearing before His Majesty with their shoes on. Ultimately a compromise was arrived at by which it was decided that members of the Legation visiting the Shah should put on goloshes over their ordinary boots, which they should take off and leave at the door of his apartments. I was much amused at Dr Odling putting on goloshes before we got out of the carriage, which he duly left at the door, and then appeared before the Shah with his hat on. I, being a stranger, did not have to go through this performance, but took my hat off, and kept my shoes on, in the ordinary European way.

The Shah was seated in a apartment chiefly conspicuous for the immense looking-glasses extending from floor to ceiling, which decorated the walls on all sides.

The month of Moharrem, which is regarded as a month of mourning by the Sheah sect, had commenced, and all the officials of the court were dressed in black. The Shah speaks French, but all my communications with him were conducted through the British dragoman, who, in the evening, after our return to Gulahek, brought a large diamond ring as a present from His Majesty for my wife.

In the grounds of the British Legation at Gulahek is a small dispensary where Dr Odling sees the poor, and here, as soon as my whereabouts became known, patients with eye affections began to collect. I performed several operations under the trees in the grounds, and in the neighbouring village.

From Gulahek we had several rides. The slope of the Elburz mountains, north of Teheran, is dotted about with the summer residences of the Shah, the various foreign legations, and of wealthy citizens. It is surprising what the soil of these bare hills will produce with suitable

irrigation. One afternoon we visited the garden of the Naib-es-Sultan, "Lieutenant of the kingdom," the third son of the Shah, which is reputed to be the most beautiful in the neighbourhood. The flowers in it were more numerous than in most Persian gardens, and its cascades and fountains were conspicuous features.

The Prince himself graciously received us. He is the commander of the Persian army, but has not nearly such an imposing or striking presence as his eldest brother. Of course we had the inevitable ices and tea, and there was a patient with something the matter with his eye produced for me to treat.

On another occasion we rode to the garden of an individual who had had the doubtful privilege of entertaining his sovereign on the previous day. I have already described what such an honour entails, and we now saw the destruction which had been effected in the shrubs and flowers, etc., of the garden by the Shah's horde of attendants. From a terrace at the back of the house we seemed to be situated right amongst the rugged crags and irregular peaks, that compose the great range of mountains which separates the fertile northern provinces bordering the Caspian, from the dry plains of the interior of Iran.

CHAPTER XII.

"CHAPARING."

FROM Teheran to Resht, on the Caspian, we decided to travel "chapar," or post, taking only Abbas with us. We accordingly broke up our caravan, sold our horses, and reduced our luggage to the smallest dimensions possible. As far as Kasvin there is a fairly good carriage road, and a regular supply of horses. We hired two carriages, one for ourselves and one for Abbas and the luggage. We left the British Legation grounds at Gulahek at 9 A.M. on July 6th, bidding good-bye to the faithful Abed, to Mahmood, and to Kodomerood, the groom. Our carriage was a sort of brougham, painted a light red and black. One of its doors refused to open, and the other refused to remain shut. It was drawn by four horses harnessed abreast, which a man drove from the box.

There are six stages to Kasvin, each of about sixteen miles. At each we had to change horses, which process took, on an average, about one hour —very satisfactory after our experiences from Kum to Teheran. By the order of Sadr Azem we were accompanied by two *gouhlams*, or mounted soldiers, a precaution which was thought advisable because a rumour had reached Teheran that Dr Galezowski, who had traversed the same road a few days previously, had been robbed. These *gouhlams* were, however, a doubtful blessing. They changed at regular intervals, often had to be waited for, and each, as he went off, required tipping. We were told, moreover, that those who had protected us on the stage they were responsible for were the most likely robbers to meet us on the next. They did not wear any uniform—simply swung a gun across their shoulders, and rode with us.

On our third stage two of our horses commenced fighting, got entangled in their, harness and rolled over. I say "harness," but it is very doubtful whether the mixture of rope, string, and straps by which the horses were tied to the carriage is worthy of that name. After the horses had been separated and got up, our Jehu, to

prevent them again falling out and biting one another, proceeded to tie their noses round with string.

The sun sank in purple and golden glory. The crescent moon, four days old, lit our course for some hours, then we travelled on through the darkness of the short summer night, and by the time we had reached Kasvin the sun had again risen.

We debated very much as to whether it would be safer to break our journey during the darkness and rest at one of the posting-houses, or continue straight on. The look of the semi-European posting-houses was not, however, inviting. The partly furnished rooms for travellers were exceedingly close and dirty, and evidently reeking with vermin ; outside in the verandahs there was generally a collection of loafers drinking tea and smoking.

This country just outside Kasvin was at one time full of terrors. Amongst the mountains on our right was situated the fort of Alamut, which was the chief stronghold of that military and religious sect called "Assassins," who were founded in the eleventh century by Hussan Ben Sabbah, the famous "Old man of the

mountains." From his first name the word assassin is said by some to have been derived, whilst others trace it to the drug hashish, which was consumed by his disciples to render them fearless and devoted. The ringleaders of the sect seem to have been free-thinkers and free-livers, indulging in every form of vice. They taught their followers, however, a form of Mohammedanism which was an offshoot of that which looked upon the *Imamat* or head priesthood as descending in an unbroken line from Ali to Ismal, his seventh successor. In a valley amongst the mountains, accessible at only one place, which was guarded by a fortress, the old man established an extensive garden in imitation of Paradise as depicted by Mahomet; in which every sensual passion could be gratified. In it were exquisitely painted pavilions. It abounded in every variety of fruit; milk, wine, honey, and water flowed freely through; it was inhabited by the most beautiful damsels, who danced, played, and sang with the greatest skill. To this place young men whom he wished to inspire in his cause were brought, having first been drugged; they were then for a time allowed to revel in the joys around them, and before satiety had had time to work its

sickening influence, were again drugged and returned once more to the outer world. Afterwards, thoroughly convinced of the supernatural powers of their chief, they were ready to use their daggers for the perpetration of any crime he might desire. This sect, which had branches extending into Syria and Egypt, and is now even said to have some adherents, was overthrown by the Tartars under Prince Hulagu, who conquered Alamut.

At Kasvin we stayed in an hotel, a large building belonging to the Governor, well situated in the middle of the town. Around it was an enclosure with trees, flowers, and running water. Our room on the first floor was paved with tiles, and contained wooden bedsteads, tables, and chairs, but this was all the accommodation afforded; for his food and cooking, the traveller has to make his own arrangements.

In the afternoon the Governor of Kasvin came and called on me; he invited us to his garden and sent his carriage to take us there. It was very prettily laid out, having abundance of flowers, the oleanders, which were in full bloom, being especially beautiful.

On our return we passed through the hall in which the "Tazya" or Mohammedan divine play

had been acted in the morning. It was then just being lighted up. Numbers of lamps, vases, and candles were congregated in masses around the sides of the building, from the ground to the roof; between the masses of lamps immense looking-glasses were hung. In the centre of the building was a raised platform for the performance. The play lasts over several days in the month of Moharrem. Its opening incidents vary considerably, but it always culminates in the tragic events which surrounded the death of Mahomet's grandson Hossein and his family at Kerbela, the pathos of which so works up the passions and feelings of the onlookers, that they spend the whole night beating their breasts and crying in mournful cadence, "Oh, Hossein, Oh, Hassan," sometimes in their excitement inflicting upon themselves bodily injuries.

Gorgeous as are the decorations of the halls in which the entertainments are held, the play itself depends entirely upon the interest of the theme depicted and the fervour of the actors. The scenic arrangements are of the very simplest, and suggest more those adopted by "The hard-handed men of Athens," who acted the tragedy of "Pyramus and Thisbe" in "A Midsummer Night's

Dream," than anything else; thus the Euphrates is generally represented by a basin of water, and the dust of the desert, which they throw on their heads, by some chopped straw.

We left Kasvin the following morning before sunrise, starting to ride "chapar." We had five horses, one each for my wife, myself, Abbas, and the "chapar" boy, and one for the luggage. By the orders of the Governor, a *ghoulam* again accompanied us. A miserable lot the horses were, some lame, most with marked knees, and all with sore backs: we had to flog them most unmercifully with long lashed "chapar" whips, exerting all our strength to get them into a gallop.

The road during the first stage was fairly level, and we were able to go at a good pace. Just before reaching Mazreh, Abbas came a spill over his horse's ears, not, however, hurting himself, and only re-opening the old sores on the animal's knees.

We waited some hours during the middle of the day at the Chapar Khaneh at Mazreh. The village is famous for a particularly unpleasant form of bug, the *gherib-ges*, whose sting is stated to have sometimes fatal effects. I had no wish to stay there, but the owner of the "chapar" horses,

the *chaparchi*, by delaying our start, hoped to induce us to do so. Having first assured us he had horses, he afterwards protested he had none. It being evident he was lying, and having a long and difficult stage before us, I was obliged to resort to physical force and use my whip on him. He then at once produced five horses, and as we left had the cool impertinence to ask for a present.

The led horse, a poor beast with only two sound legs, delayed us considerably. Fortunately after going about a *farsakh*, we met some others returning, and were able to change it for the best of them. On ascending to the summit of the Pass of Kharsan, the road became stony and precipitous, while the surrounding scenery was wild and mountainous. At the head of the pass there is a caravanseri, with a small village, and even in this lonesome locality, a *Tazya* on a small scale was being enacted. From there to Paichenar was one steep descent, down which we had to pick our way slowly and with care, more especially so when night came on, for the moon, though bright, was shut out from us by the high mountains on our left; many times we had to get down and walk. Every now and then we met a caravan of donkeys

or mules going in the opposite direction, the passing of which in the dark was a difficult and tedious process.

We halted for some tea at a hut on the mountain-side, and our surroundings were most picturesque. An immense peak towered up in front, which was lit by the moonlight, we ourselves being in deep shadow ; a turbulent stream splashed over its rocky bed by the side of the road, on the banks of which were scattered trees and bushes. From the open door of the hut proceeded the glare of a fire, and Abbas running to and fro, with his red and yellow head-dress falling down to his shoulders, completed the picture.

It was 11.30 before we reached the Chapar Khaneh at Paichenar, and at five the next morning Abbas called us to say the horses had arrived, and that we could go on. We arose very stiff and tired, partly from the exertions of the previous day, and partly from having had only our rugs to spread over the wooden bedsteads on which we slept. Our room during breakfast swarmed with flies, and it was difficult to put anything down without killing several of them.

By 7.30 we were off again, having crossed the Shahrud or King's river. We kept along its banks

over a long stretch of uneven ground; fortunately a breeze was blowing, otherwise the heat would have been intense. Much of the land in the neighbourhood of the river is laid out in melon and cucumber beds. We found sucking at a water-melon a most effective and safe way of assuaging our thirst. At Mengil there were no horses to be had, and we, not very unwillingly, were obliged to rest for the remainder of the day.

In the evening a Belgian lady and her husband, travelling in the same direction as ourselves, arrived at the Chapar Khaneh. We feared that by offering the owner of it a large present they might get the horses which we were entitled to, being there first. Abbas therefore brought the *chaparchi* up to me, and I threatened him with the whip unless they were forthcoming at the time we wanted them. He had of course a string of lies to try and detain us with. A "chapar" boy, he said, who had just come in, told him it was raining furiously in the direction we were going, and that the road was flooded. I paid no attention to all this, and ultimately we got off at a quarter past five, an hour later than we had intended. Our horses this time were the best we had had, and we got over the first stage of five *farsakhs* very

comfortably, first crossing by a bridge the Sefid Rud, and then keeping along its western bank, sometimes passing by the edge of steep precipices, at the bottom of one of which I saw the carcase of a horse which had been lately blown over. Here and there the road was composed of such rough and slippery rocks that we had to dismount and walk; now and then we got a gallop across a sandy plain at the bottom of the hills. My horse was a regular Persian; he would start straight off at the top of his speed, and pull up again with equal suddenness. As we proceeded, we gradually met with more and more vegetation, passing through groves of olive trees, pomegranates, and green figs. On reaching Rustamabad, I said we wanted to go on at once, but was met with the usual cry of "No horses." On looking about I discovered some, which the *chaparchi* declared were no good. Anyhow I said we would have them, and they did not turn out badly. There is a fixed tariff for riding "chapar"—one kran for each horse for each *farsakh*. Their owners have learnt how impatient Europeans always are to get on, so they attempt to delay as much as possible, with the hope of getting an extra tip to induce them to hurry. I had learnt by this time that the fear of the whip produced a similar effect.

After leaving Rustamabad the vegetation became exceeding thick and luxuriant. There was a dense jungle on either side of the road we were traversing. Plane, bamboo, acacia, and other trees were very numerous. The acacias, with their graceful, sweet-smelling pink and white blossoms, were exceedingly pretty. Rain commenced to fall, and continued all the rest of the way to Resht.

At Imam Assam, three *farsakhs* from Rustamabad, the two carriages which I had telegraphed for to be sent from Resht were waiting for us. They were Russian droskies, and we at once had the horses put in and drove off. The difference between the country we passed through and that of the rest of Persia we had seen was very striking. The sky, instead of being a cloudless blue, was now an ashy grey; the air, instead of being clear and dry, was saturated with moisture, mists arising on all sides from the marshy grounds. In place of bare, stony plains and rocky heights, were tangled masses of shrubs and plants, and dense woods of a most luxuriant green. The houses in the village were no longer composed of dry mud bricks, but built of wood, with thatched roofs, and most of them were standing on piles to

raise them from the ground. The sallow complexions and sad, drawn, pinched looks of the inhabitants told only too plainly of the miasmatic and unhealthy character of the country.

Resht, which is the principal Persian town on the coast of the Caspian, we reached at 7.30 P.M. A British Consul resides here, but like most of the other British Consuls in Persia at the time of our visit, he was absent on leave. We stayed for the night at what is called an Armenian hotel, which seemed to me typical of the whole town of Resht—a place of squalor and dirt. It is the capital of the fertile province of Gilan, and was at one time a centre of the silk trade, which article of produce has largely decreased of late years in consequence of a disease among the silk-worms.

A kind of embroidered patchwork, known as Resht work, is produced there. It consists of pieces of the most brilliantly coloured cloth cut into various shapes and fitted together, an elaborate pattern in a light-coloured silk thread being embroidered over them. Amongst the Persians themselves it is chiefly used for saddle-cloths; for Europeans, table-cloths are made of it.

Rain fell continuously until we left Resht, about the middle of the following day, and the roads



A KURDISH WOMAN.

were a sea of slush. In another drosky we drove along an abominable, partly-paved road, a distance of about six miles, to the small village of Pir-i-Bazaar, where, after much bargaining and waiting, we secured a barge, in which we were conveyed to Enzali. At first we were rowed, with many cries for the assistance of Ali, Hossein, and Hassan on the part of the oarsmen, along a sort of creek bounded on either side by banks of tall rushes, and abounding in water-fowl. On emerging from the creek into the lagoon, or *murd-ab*, we were towed by a steamer to the landing-stage at Enzali. The journey from Pir-i-Bazaar to Enzali took us two and a half hours.

Enzali is situated on the sandbank which separates the lagoon from the Caspian. On one side of the channel, which passes between the two, is the Customs House, and a red-tiled villa belonging to the Shah. On the other side of the channel is an hotel, kept by Russians, at which we stayed and loitered about in a considerable part of the next day waiting the arrival of the steamer which was to convey us to Baku.

A bar prevents steamers approaching to within a considerable distance of Enzali, and we were

obliged to row a long way in a crowded open boat through a choppy sea.

Abbas accompanied us to the steamer, and having seen us safely lodged in our cabin, parted from us with tears in his eyes. I know no better wish I can make to any one who is going to travel in Persia than that they should have a servant as honest, as obliging, and as uniformly useful as we found Abbas, to accompany them.

I have now finished the description of our journey through the realms of Iran, and I will not detain the reader long with an account of our onward road home, through the often-described, more civilised countries of Europe. The Russian steamer on the Caspian, though small, was fairly comfortable. We weighed anchor in the afternoon of July 12th, and glided along in sight of the forest-clad hills on the shore the following day, stopping for a short time at two small towns nestling amongst wooded heights.

At ten on the morning of the 14th we reached Baku, the "city of eternal fire," as it has been called. We could smell the petroleum before we got into the harbour, and plenty of it could be seen floating on the water along the coast. It is said that the inhabitants used to pour, in calm

weather, large quantities on to the sea and then set it alight, and watch it being carried out of sight on the waves, like a sea of fire.

Baku is a town which has been Turkish, Persian, and Russian each in turn. It was finally incorporated with Russia in 1806. For many years it was the Mecca of fire-worshippers, numbers of pilgrims of this faith resorting to it, attracted there by the inflammable character of the vapours arising from the ground.

Of late, since the railway has been constructed connecting it with Batoum on the Black Sea, it has become the seat of great activity, and the oil obtained from its wells is now being widely distributed over the world.

The town is situated on a declivity, which is surmounted by a castle, once a palace of the Shahs of Persia. It has a well-built quay and several broad streets, along which tramways run. The petroleum, however, is everywhere. It is used for lighting, heating, and cooking; with it the roofs of the older houses are coated; and it is the source of the motive-power which propels the steamers which ply in the harbour, and the trains on the Trans-Caucasian railway.

The newer streets of this rapidly-growing town

have a garish look. Advertisements are exhibited about them in great profusion, striking us with all their ghastly ugliness in coming fresh from one of the few countries which is still free from this hideous outgrowth of modern civilization.

The train from Baku, on the Caspian, running south of the Caucasus through Tifilis, leaves at 11.15 at night, and reaches Batoum on the Black Sea at 8.30 A.M. two days after.

Batoum is another town of mushroom-like growth. It became the property of Russia after the last Russo-Turkish war, and is rapidly growing into a port of considerable importance. The Russians are extending its harbour, and, notwithstanding their pledge at the Berlin Conference, strongly fortifying it. From Batoum we crossed the Black Sea in an Italian steamer to Constantinople; from there we took the *Messageries* boat to Marseilles, and went across France home.

Now, patient reader, to you who have followed the account of my journey to its end, I say in Persian phraseology: "You have honoured me." "I am your slave." "May your shadow never grow less."

INDEX.

ABADEH, 108-114.
Abbas, 31, 32, 35, 105, 268, 278, 286, 294.
Abbott, Mr Keith, 264.
Abed, 23, 24, 32, 35, 69, 105, 113, 198, 278.
Abraham Kulli Khan, 126.
Achæmenian kings, 6, 73, 76, 90, 99, 173, 183.
Aga Mohammed Khan, 271.
Aganoor, Dr, 159.
Aganoor, Mr, 226.
Ahmedi, 33.
Alamut, 280.
Albuquerque, 16.
Alexander the Great, 73, 79, 91, 100.
Ali Verdi Khan, 131, 226.
Arbela, Battle of, 73.
Archbishop of Julfa, 214.
Arhiman, 6.
Armenians, 205-214.
Asafœtida plants, 234, 237.
Assassins, 280.
Astrakan fur, 202.
Astrologers, 177.
Azis Sultan, 269.

BABYLON, 99.
Bahrein, 19.
Bakhtiari, 173.
Baku, 294-296.
Batoum, 295, 296.
Bazaar at Bushire, 26.
,, at Ispahan, 220-225, 243.
,, at Kum, 258.
,, at Teheran, 267.
Bee-eaters, 25.
Behistoon Rock, 59.
Belshazzar, 100.
Bird, Miss, 229.
Bishop, Mrs, 174.
Black, Mr, 21.
Boils at Julfa, 179.
Borasjun, 36-38, 41.
Bread-making, 253.
Bruce, Dr, 199, 226.
Bundamir Stream, 70.
Bunder Abbas, 16-18.
Bushire, 22-26, 129.

CALIGRAPHY, 198.
Cambyses, 270.
Caravanseri, 34.
Carless, Rev. Mr, 229.
Carpets, 93, 94, 192-197.
Cemetery, Armenian, 237.
,, at Kum, 257.
"Chapar-Khaneh," 107.
"Chapar" riding, cost of, 288.
Chardin, 137, 196, 239.
Charms, 175.
Charvadars, 30.
Chehar Bagh, 225, 226.
Chehl Situn Palace and Gardens, 133-143, 187, 188.
Climate, 178.
Coins, 201.
Convent at Julfa, 213.
Costume of Armenians, 211.
,, of peasants, 42.
,, of Persian ladies, indoor, 157.
Costume of Persian ladies, outdoor, 163, 164.
Costume of soldiers, 117.
Crœsus, 99.
Crows, 49.
Curzon, Mr, 122, 174, 219.
Cyrus the Great, 97-101, 206, 270.

DALIKY, 38, 40.
Darius Codomanus, 73.

Darius Hystaspes, 59, 60, 78, 80, 206, 270.
Dasht-i-Arzen, 48, 50.
Dasht-i-Bam, 48.
Dehbid, 104.
Deh-i-naw, 102.
Demavend, Mt., 266.
Democedes, 270.
Dervishes, 107, 160.
Dias Bartholomew, 15.
Dillyjon, 248.
Diodorus, 74.
Donkeys, 29.

EARTHENWARE, 182-184.
,, at Kum, 261.
Elias, Mr and Mrs, 181, 243.
Embroideries, 197.
Enzali, 293.

FAITH ALI SHAH, 145, 271.
Farsakh, 106.
Fatima, 254, 258.
Feridon, 185.
Firdausi, 165, 188, 191.
Fire altar, 241.
Fleet, Persian, 22.
Flowers, wild, 42, 49, 247.
Fruit stalls at Kum, 261.

GABRE-MADER-I-SOLEIMAN, 97.
Galezowski, Dr, 150, 271, 272.
Gardens around Teheran, 277.
Gelim, 59, 197.
Geyer, Mr, 234.
Gez, 243.
Glover, Sergeant, 109.
Gouhlams, 279, 284.
Greene, Mr Cunningham, 268.
Guard of the Road, 47.
Guebres, 7.
Gulahek, 268, 269.

HADJI, 30, 70.
Hafiz, 52, 54, 112, 176.
Hall of One Hundred Columns, 77, 79.
Halwa, 14.
Hakims, 167.
Hatem Kari, 58.
Hats, 248.
Hotel at Teheran, 268.
Hulagu Prince, 282.
Huseinabad, 265.
Hussan Ben Sabbah, 280.
Hussein Khan, Dr, 25, 149, 152, 167.
Hypostile Hall of Xerxes, 77, 79.

ILKHANI, 174, 244.
Imam Assam, 289.
Indo-European Telegraph, 39, 47.
Isfendiyar, 191.
Ispahan, 124, 130-158, 204-242.
Istakhr, 90.

JEMSHEED, 37, 54, 55, 76, 185.
Jenkinson, Mr Anthony, 140.
Johnson, Mr, 39.
Julfa, 125-132, 204-219.

Kabobs, 223.
Kahrizak, 266.
Kagar dynasty, 182, 271.
Kajawas, 27, 28.
Kalian, 57.
Kalıat, 60.
Kamarij, 43.
Kanat, 92, 234, 246.
Kara Chai, 264.
Karak Island, 37.
Kashan, 246.
Kasvin, 279-284.
Kazerun, 44, 46.
Kerbela, 176, 283.
Kerman, 192, 197, 202.
Khan-i-Kirgen, 103, 104.
Khan-i-Koreh, 104-106.
Khan-i-Zinian, 50.
Kharsan, Pass of, 285.
Khu-i-Suffa, 234, 237.
Khushab, Battle of, 36.
Kinaregird, 265.
Kishm Island, 18.
Kmareh, 76.
Kodomerood, 31, 32, 278.
Konar Takhteh, 42.
Kornatski, Mr Eugene von, 24.
Kotal dokhter, 46.
Kotal-i-Kamarij, 43.
Kotal-i-Mallu, 41.
Kotal-i-Pir-i-zan, 48.
Kum, 254-263.
Kumishah, 123.
Kurrachee, 11.
Kush-i-Nasret, 265.

LANGUAGE, Armenian, 211.
Lanterns, 230.

Latch-key, 233.
Layard, 173.
Lettsom, Dr, 168.
Lingah, 18, 19.
Lions, 50.
Locusts, 86.

MADAN, Mines of, 202.
Mahmood, 31, 32, 69, 278.
Mak-sud-Beggi, 121.
Manuchar Khan, 67.
Marg, 124.
Mayar, 124.
Mazreh, 284.
Median court, 80.
Mehma, 246.
Meiden at Ispahan, 219.
Melons, 239, 287.
Mengil, 287.
Mervdasht, 73.
Metal work, 184-187.
Mirage, 33.
Mirza Taki Khan, 273, 275.
Mishapur, 202.
Mission, English, at Julfa, 226.
,, French Catholic, at Julfa, 230.
Mohammerah, 37.
Moharrem, month of, 276.
Morier, 110.
Mudakhil, 31.
Mullah bashi at Shiraz, 63.
Murchakhar, 244, 245.
Murghab, 97.
Muscat, 12-14.
Mushir-el-Mulk, 41.

NADIR SHAH, 140, 143, 245.
Naib-es-Sultan, 277.
Naizar, 250.
Nakhs-i-Rustem, 75.
Nomads, 93, 250.
No Ruz, festival of, 37, 59.

ODLING, DR, 63, 269, 271, 272, 275, 276.
Ophthalmia, 69, 173.
Opium-fields, 233.
Orchards, 254.
Ormuz, 15.
Ormuzd, 5, 86, 91, 206, 241.
Outram, Sir James, 36.

PAICHENAR, 285, 286.
Palgrave, Mr, 20.
Papier-maché, 187, 200.
Parsees at Bombay, 4-10.
Parthians, 91.
Pascal, Père, 230.
Pearl fishery, 19.
Persepolis, 7, 57, 73-91, 173.
Petroleum springs at Baku, 295.
,, ,, at Daliky, 39.
Pigeon towers, 238.
Pir-i-Bazaar, 293.
Polo Marco, 15, 202, 264.
Polvar, River, 91, 97.
Preece, Mr, 226.
Priests, Armenian, 214.
Princess Banoe-Ozmeh, 153-157.
Propylæa, 77, 89.
Pul-i-Marnnu, 131.
Pul-i-Chehar-Bagh, 131, 132.

RABAT TURK, 247.
Race course at Julfa, 234.
Railway along Persian Gulf, 21.
,, at Teheran, 266.
Ramagan, 37.
Resht, 290.
Rhages, 182, 266.
Royal mosque at Ispahan, 220.
Rudabeh, 165, 166, 188.
Rustam, 165, 188, 191.
Rustamabad, 289.

SADDLE-BAGS, 58.
Sadi, 52.
Sadr Azam, 146, 263, 272, 273.
Sanctuary, 258.
Sassoon's, 24, 124.
Satib Abdullah Khan, 110, 112, 113, 120, 130, 219, 240, 243.
Savé, 264.
Schools, Armenian, 214.
Scully, Dr, 62, 63, 64.
Sefavi dynasty, 137, 204.
Sefid Rud, 288.
Seth, Mr, 124, 125, 126, 243.
Seyds, 161, 162.
Shah Abbas, the Great, 16, 131, 132, 140, 177, 181, 204, 212, 213.
Shah Abbas II., 140.
Shah Imail, 137, 139.
Shah Nasr-ed-din, 145, 269, 271.
Shah Tamasp, 139.
Shahrud, 286.
Shapur River, 44.

Shaking minarets, 238, 240.
Sheah sect, 138.
Sheik Abdul Azis, 266.
Sherbet, 112.
Shiraz, 51-67, 102, 187, 267.
Shoes, 45.
Shulgestan, 117.
Shynder, Dr, 270.
Silver work, 57, 187.
Sivend, 91, 93.
Soldiers, 49, 50, 117.
Stainton, Mr, 124, 126, 234, 243.
Streets at Julfa, 230.
Sultan Selim I., 138.
Surmeh, 106, 107.
Swallows, 40, 49.

TAXATION, 61.
Tazya, 282, 285.
Teheran, 77, 167, 257, 266, 267, 276.
Teng-i-Allahu-Akbar, 65.
Tisdale, Rev. Mr., 226.
Tolison, Dr, 270.
Towers of Silence, 8.
Turquoises, 202.

UXII, 73, 173.

VALERIAN, Emperor, 44.
Vineyards, 54.

WILLS, Dr, 179.
Wine, 54.

XERXES, 74, 77, 78, 79.

YABOO, 29, 35.
Yezdikhast, 117-121.

ZAL, 165, 188.
Zargon, 67-70.
Zeigler & Co., Messrs, 196, 234.
Zend-Avesta, 5.
Zendeh-Kud, 131, 132, 204.
Zille Sultan, Prince, 23, 130-152
Zohak, 185.
Zoroaster, 5, 85.

PRINTED AT THE EDINBURGH PRESS, 9 AND 11 YOUNG STREET.